Nur Misuari refuses to enter plea in rebellion trial

Story on PAGE A2

3 generals urged Viña to testify; he said no

By TJ Burgonio

THREE police generals, including then PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza, met with Senior Supt. Teofilo Viña in 2001 to talk him into turning state witness in the November 2000 kidnap-slay of Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and Emmanuel Corbito.

3 GENERALS/ A14

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

P135-M Lotto prize won

ONE LUCKY lotto player from the Visayas-Mindanao region is P135,041,184 million richer after picking the winning combination in the 6/49 Super Lotto draw last night. The winner correctly picked the numbers 20-45-25-13-29-33.

This was the first time the Super Lotto jackpot was won since November 14, when another lucky player from the Visayas-Mindanao area took home the P22.9-million prize. *Agnes E. Donato*

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Friday, January 10, 2003 ★★ 44 pages / 4 sections / vol. 18 / no. 33 P15 website: www.inq7.net

GMA: Reform or perish

FVR sees 'nothing new' in council

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Carlito Pablo

FORMER President Fidel Ramos sees "nothing new" in the Council of State that leaders of the ruling Lakas-CMD agreed Wednesday night to establish in line with the administration's vision of a government of national unity.

Ramos said President Macapagal-Arroyo formed such a Council of State in her first year in office at the height of criticisms against her administration, and named former President Corazon Aquino, Vice President Teofisto Guingona and himself as members.

He said the council had met only once so far but that the idea now was to expand its membership.

"[The Council of State] is nothing new," Ramos said in a chance interview at the vin d'honneur yesterday in Malacañang. "It is another [form of] reaching out on the part of the President to the leaders of the various political groups, including the opposition."

Ramos also said his party mates should go slow in deciding

FVR/ A4

Senate row: Coup or status quo?

By Rocky Nazareno

THEY may not like him but they are not planning to oust him.

That's Sen. Joker Arroyo referring to Senate President Franklin Drilon and speaking in behalf of the Wednesday Group, which is known to vote as one in the chamber and can muster the numbers if the occasion requires it.

"We are not behind Drilon but we don't want the setup changed," Arroyo said yesterday at a press conference.

Neither, he said, would he and the other members of the Wednesday group—Senators Noli de Castro, Francis Pangilinan, Ralph Recto and Manuel Villar—be convinced to shift allegiance to Sen. Edgardo Angara, chair of the opposition Laban ng

SENATE/ A14

FILIPINO OF THE YEAR 2002

EDWIN BACASMAS

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

Sacrifice on the altar of national unity

Editor's Note: The Philippine Daily Inquirer's Filipino of the Year honors a living Filipino who made the most positive impact on the life of the nation.

Now on its 12th year, it was the first time that a nominee at the bottom was catapulted overnight to the top.

Of the 31 editors who voted, President Macapagal only got two votes. Clear winner was Acsa Ramirez, the whistleblower in the P203-million tax diversion scam, who had been presented to the media as a suspect. She symbolized the Filipino as a perennial victim. But on Dec. 30 President Macapagal declared she would not run for election in 2004 mainly to heal as she put it a "deeply divided" country. The significance of her decision was not lost on the editors. Ten of them changed their votes giving the President 12 votes or 38.71 percent of the votes cast.

The other nominees were Bayani Fernando, Abadilla 5, Eugenia Duran-Apostol, Manuel Pangilinan, Teofisto Guingona, Sen. Ping Lacson, Sulficio Tagud, Manny Pacquiao, Raul Roco, Dinky Soliman, Jaime Augusto Zobel.

PRESIDENT Macapagal won a plurality of the INQUIRER votes not because of her outstanding achievements in 2002 but be-

SACRIFICE/ A4

She delivers major policy speech at PSE today

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE PRESIDENT'S stark message contrasted sharply with the tinkle of champagne glasses.

Warning that the nation must "reform or perish," President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday used Malacañang's New Year's reception for diplomats and politicians to push the case for vitally needed reform.

"This nation is at a crossroads. Quite simply, it must reform or perish," she said at the vin d'honneur. "There can be no falling back ... Either this country moves forward or dies."

Ms Macapagal also defended her record in office against accusations of greed and incompetence, but she revealed little of plans to revamp a sagging economy since her dramatic Rizal Day announcement that she would not run for president in 2004.

Starting today and in the weeks to come, she merely said, she would present the series of programs "that I believe need to be embraced if this nation is to succeed."

Ms Macapagal is expected to deliver a major policy speech before the Philippine Stock Exchange today.

"I shall do everything in my power to succeed," she vowed. "And trust me, that liberated power is considerable. Relieved of the burden of political ambition, this office has the power to make and unmake."

"By stepping off the political stage in 2004, I take a step higher

GMA/ A15

THREE Presidents in one frame during the Vin D' Honneur: Aquino, Ramos and Macapagal. Can you spot a 4th?

YAL HANDUMON

Even GMA critics invited to Palace fete for diplomats

By Dona Pazzibugan

AT YESTERDAY'S traditional vin d'honneur, the guest list was anything but traditional.

Some of the President's most vocal critics showed up at Malacanang's New Year's reception for the diplomatic corps, including opposition leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Makati Rep. Butz Aquino and Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla.

Even Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo and Akbayan party-list Rep. Etta Rosales dressed in Filipiniana attire to attend the affair for the first time.

In what observers said was a first, President Macapagal-Arroyo allowed lawmakers, some appointed officials and even police and military officers to come up the reception line that is usually reserved for foreign ambassadors.

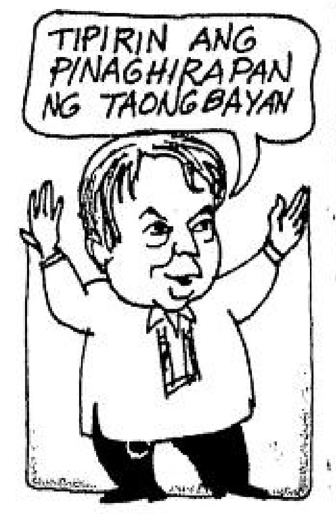
As a result, the reception lasted longer than the time it took for the President to deliver her speech (15 minutes), and for the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Antonio Franco, to deliver his remarks (10 minutes). The Nuncio is traditionally the dean of the diplomatic corps.

This time around, Malacañang also took care to invest the affair with more pomp and ceremony.

A red carpet was laid out on the ground outside the main Malacañang building for the guests to walk on as soon as they got off their cars.

In the past the red carpet was spread only inside the Ceremonial Hall.

EVEN/ A14



TIPIRIN ANG PINAGHIRAPAN NG TAONGBAYAN

The Scrooge of Congress is a Joker

By Cynthia Balana

JOKER Arroyo, the Scrooge of Congress, did it again.

In his one and a half years as a senator, Arroyo repeated his record of nine years in the House of Representatives as the most frugal legislator.

An itemized list of audited expenses for 2001 showed that Arroyo spent P5.39 million, the lowest

THE SCROOGE/ A15

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The Northern and Eastern sections of Luzon and Eastern Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/01/10/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

Nur enters no plea in rebellion trial

By Michael Lim Ubac

PROFESSING his innocence, Moro leader Nur Misuari yesterday refused to enter a plea to charges he had orchestrated the bloody mutiny by hundreds of his followers in Jolo, Sulu, in November 2001.

This prompted Judge Norberto Y. Geraldez of Calamba [Laguna] Regional Trial Court Branch 36 to enter a plea of "not guilty" in Misuari's behalf.

The arraignment, which finally pushed through after four postponements since April 2001, was held in continuance, however, after three of Misuari's seven co-accused—including his spiritual adviser Abu Usman—protested that they could not understand the proceedings in English or Tagalog. Their arraignment has been reset for Jan. 30.

Misuari's refusal to enter a plea followed a heated debate between government lawyers led by State Prosecutor Peter Ong and Leo Dacera and his defense team led by former congressman Homobono Adaza.

Ong and Dacera said they would oppose any move by Misuari's lawyers to have Geraldez removed from the case, for his perceived bias against Misuari.

Adaza said the judge should not have entered a plea on Misuari's behalf since the Department of Justice had not yet ruled on a petition for review of the rebellion case, which the defense had sought.

But Acting Justice Secretary Ma. Merceditas N. Gutierrez had junked the petition for review on Jan. 6, although a copy of the ruling had yet to be received by Misuari's lawyers.

Adaza then approached the prosecutors and urged them to allow newly appointed Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong to review Gutierrez's resolution junking Misuari's petition for review.

"Why not give the new secretary a chance to act on this?" Adaza was heard to have said.

MISUARI

Datumanong is a Muslim and the defense panel apparently believes he will be sympathetic to Misuari, the former governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Ong said the DOJ would vehemently oppose "whatever motion the defense will file."

The defense panel then tried another tack, saying their client's indictment should be suspended in light of "the sudden change in political atmosphere," referring to proposals to allow leftist and Moro rebel leaders to sit in a "unity government."

"After several postponements, the arraignment of Mr. Misuari and his companions pushed through today. The amended information was read to them in English and Tagalog, (yet) they refused to proceed on the pretext (of giving) the 'government of national unity' a chance to evaluate the case," Ong said.

The DOJ on Jan. 7, 2002 had found probable cause to indict Misuari and 17 of his followers, including Abu Sayyaf Group leader Ghalib Andang, alias Commander Robot, for rebellion.

The DOJ said that on Nov. 19, 2001, about 600 of Misuari's supporters attacked military outposts and a police station in Jolo, Sulu, in a bid to stop the regional elections in the ARMM from taking place.

The uprising, which lasted for days, left over 100 people dead.

Misuari fled to Malaysia where local authorities arrested him on Nov. 24, 2001 as he arrived in Sabah by boat. He was detained for breaking Malaysian immigration laws before being deported to Manila in January 2002.

Criminal charges were filed against him before the Jolo [Sulu] Regional Trial Court on Jan. 3, 2002, but the trial venue was changed to Calamba on orders of then Justice Secretary Hernando Perez.

Misuari is being held in Fort Sto. Domingo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, in a bungalow that had been specially built for deposed President Joseph Estrada.

No pact, no MILF in gov't

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza said a peace accord will have to come first before offering a place in unity government to the different rebel groups.

He said it was not viable to involve rebel groups like the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in the unity government because "the Cabinet has made a very clear statement that there can be no involvement of rebel groups or rebel representatives unless there is a peace agreement with them." *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

LAKAS BET IN 2004

Insider first before Roco

By Juliet L. Javellana

THE RULING Lakas-CMD will "look" for a standard-bearer within its ranks before considering an "outsider" like Raul Roco. *(See story on Page 1)*

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., co-chair of Lakas, yesterday summed up its ambivalent attitude toward Roco thus: "We're keeping him in mind."

At the meeting of the Lakas executive committee Wednesday night in Malacañang, "there was a decision not to endorse any candidate, whether Roco or anybody else," Lakas national spokesperson Heherson Alvarez said in a phone interview.

He said one of the decisions made at the meeting was for all party members not to endorse any candidate, at least not until December when President Macapagal-Arroyo might decide to "anoint" her possible successor.

Alvarez said the decision was addressed to Lakas secretary general Hernando Perez and other party members who had endorsed Roco's adoption as candidate.

"Based from reactions (Wednesday) night, the party will correct itself," Alvarez said. "We won't join the bandwagon (of the) popular. Within the party, we will look for our candidate."

Alvarez and Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay said the President herself pointed out that Lakas had its own choices.

"We're not wanting in presidential wannabes," Pichay quoted the President as saying.

He added: "Definitely, we're going to field our own candidate who will be chosen in a selection process."

But Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the President should take her "depoliticizing act" a step further by inhibiting herself from the selection of Lakas' standard-bearer.

In a statement, Pimentel said Ms Macapagal should even take a leave of absence as chair of Lakas "to quell any doubt about her vow to shy away from politicking in the last 18 months of her term consistent with her decision not to seek another term."

"Only by totally shying away from partisan political activities can (she) truly claim that she is President to all the Filipinos, not only of a particular party, or, in her own words, an apolitical President," Pimentel said.

He also pointed out that the President's mere act of "anointing" her successor would "partake of politicking." *With a report from Rocky Nazareno*

GMA ads off the air

WHATEVER happened to the TV ad showing how a poor family was finally able to buy an electric fan thanks to the savings derived from reduced electric bills?

The administration has apparently pulled the plug on that government infomercial since it could no longer back it up with reality, said a former legislator who is speaking for groups demanding the abolition of the purchased power adjustment or PPA in electricity bills.

Former senator Juan Ponce Enrile found the discontinued ad an apt metaphor for President Macapagal-Arroyo's short-lived order in May 2002 for the National Power Corp. to lower the PPA charge.

"That's why she has pulled out her electric fan infomercial—because she can no longer prove it," Enrile said in Filipino.

Enrile supplied the political undertones to yesterday's forum at Club Filipino where consumer groups denounced the "slow and quiet" comeback of the PPA charge in Meralco monthly bills.

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Corpus stays as AFP's top spook

By Martin P. Marfil

CORPUS

THE MILITARY'S top spook, Col. Victor Corpus, will keep his job as head of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

This was affirmed by Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes yesterday amid talk that Corpus was on the way out.

"Colonel Corpus stays on the job, okay?" said Reyes in an interview at the E. Rodriguez Elementary School in Quezon City, where he was distributing relief goods to victims of the recent Cubao fire. He also announced that President Macapagal-Arroyo had approved the release of P2 million for the fire victims.

Asked if the controversial Corpus would be promoted, Reyes refused to give a firm answer.

"We don't know yet. The promotion would have to go through a process," Reyes said.

Corpus gained notoriety when, as a young second lieutenant, he raided the Philippine Military Academy armory and joined the communist rebellion during martial law. He had since renounced the insurgency and rejoined the government.

The AFP public information office had said earlier that Corpus was qualified for promotion to brigadier general. But his promotion was being hindered by the law that limits the number of generals to 75 percent of the officers corps, or 86 generals, a number that has been filled.

Corpus had earlier described talk about his supposed transfer out of the ISAFP as "mere rumors."

Talk of his transfer was sparked by the scheduled retirement of some generals next month, which is expected to trigger a revamp in the AFP high command.

Laurel III dies; 88

JOSE S. Laurel III, son of the former president and an expert on Philippine-Japan relations, will be interred today.

Laurel died on Monday at the age of 88. His body will be cremated and his ashes interred in a crypt at the St. James the Great chapel in Ayala-Alabang.

He is survived by wife Beatriz and children Ma. Elena, Mercedes, Christine, Antonio, Jose V. Francis, Benjamin and Eduardo. Laurel III, a lawyer, held several government positions, including that of adviser to at least two presidents.

He founded several organizations devoted to developing relations between the Philippines and Japan.

Laurel finished his undergraduate course at the University of the Philippines and got his law degree from the Manuel L. Quezon University. He also studied at the Imperial Military Academy of Japan.

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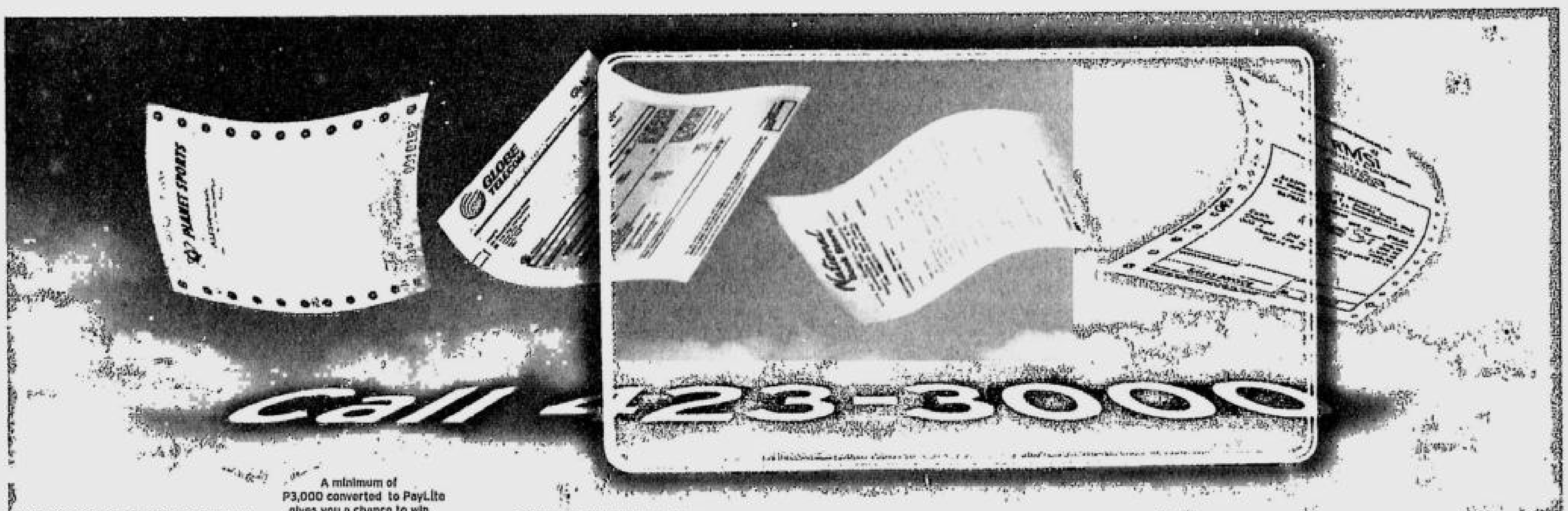

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NBI nabs Customs cashier for plunder

By Philip Tubeza

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation agents have arrested a ranking Bureau of Customs collection officer who failed to remit P53 million from the sale of forms on which he had withheld the documentary stamps.

Special collecting officer Ernesto A. Fajardo, 45, of BF Homes, Las Piñas City, faces the death penalty after he was charged with plunder, said NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco during a press conference at NBI headquarters yesterday.

Government officials may be charged with plunder, which is a heinous crime, when the amount involved is at least P50 million.

Wycoco and Customs Commissioner Antonio M. Bernardo presented Fajardo to media.

Investigators are checking records to see if Fajardo had failed to remit more than the amount uncovered so far. He has been a collector since 1982 and had been assigned to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport customshouse.

"I have said time and again that the policy at the Bureau of Customs is to reward honest personnel and punish erring ones," said Bernardo in a statement.

"As we are throwing the book at Mr. Fajardo for his folly, I want to declare that the bureau will continue to crack down on erring employees and officials. We will charge them in court and not stop until they are behind bars. This, I believe, is the only way to rid the bureau of the few scalawags who have given the entire agency a very bad reputation," he said.

Bernardo said he has ordered an audit of all customs cashiers to make sure the malversation was "not happening to others inside the bureau."

He said it was state auditor Prudencia S. Bautista who discovered that Fajardo had failed to remit P20,118,355 to the bureau between January and October 2002.

ERNIE SARMIENTO

CUSTOMS collection officer Ernesto Fajardo tries to cover his face as he is presented to the media by the stern-looking Customs commissioner Antonio Bernardo at the NBI headquarters.

The BOC then approached the NBI and the latter's National Capital Region unit, under Regional Director Edmund Arugay, looked into the case.

Based on an analysis of the Monthly Sales of Accountable Forms and Stamps, state auditor Nancy B. Marco found that Fajardo had failed to remit P53,214,258 from 2000 to 2002. He did not attach documentary stamps to the so-called accountable forms.

On Jan. 8, Customs Collector Celso P. Templo asked Fajardo about the missing funds. He was then arrested and taken to the NBI office for investigation.

Wycoco said Fajardo has been charged with plunder and malversation of public funds before the Department of Justice.

He said the investigation is continuing to find out if Fajardo had accomplices.

Fajardo refused to comment at yesterday's press conference.

17 more DPWH execs face raps in vehicle repair scam

By Blanche S. Rivera

SEVENTEEN more executives and employees of the Department of Public Works and Highways will face administrative charges for their role in the P182-million vehicle repair scam.

Outgoing Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong said that the 17 would be charged before the Office of the Secretary. They were not identified.

He, however, added that his newly appointed successor, Bayani Fernando, would be the one to hear the cases. Datumanong will be taking over the Department of Justice week after next.

Thirteen other DPWH officials, mostly section chiefs, accountants and procurement staff, were dismissed from the service for dishonesty, gross neglect of duty and grave misconduct.

Two bookkeepers were meted a six-month suspension for inefficiency in the performance of duty while a cash section chief was given a one-year suspension for incompetence.

The fate of the five presidential appointees—Emily Tanquintic, Oscar Abundo, Bert Favorito, Abraham Divina and Florendo Arias—will be up to the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission, Datumanong said.

A five-member team investigated the vehicle repair anomaly, which bled the DPWH of some P182 million for unnecessary and ghost repairs of vehicles. The cost of the repairs, investigators discovered, far exceeded the cost of purchasing new vehicles.

Two other high-ranking DPWH officials, Undersecretaries Edmundo Mir and Mabini Pablo, had served a 90-day suspension for command responsibility.

But Datumanong said yesterday that the investigating team he formed found no reason to file charges against them. Both Pablo and Mir had been reinstated, but Mir had reportedly already filed for his retirement.

The initial results of the investigation, which were released in July last year, identified 41 DPWH officials and employees who were involved in the vehicle repair anomaly.

New firing, new uproar at PTA

By Jerome Aning

THE PHILIPPINE Tourism Authority has been thrown into an uproar for the second time in two months after Malacañang removed a member of its board and replaced him with the brother of a congressman.

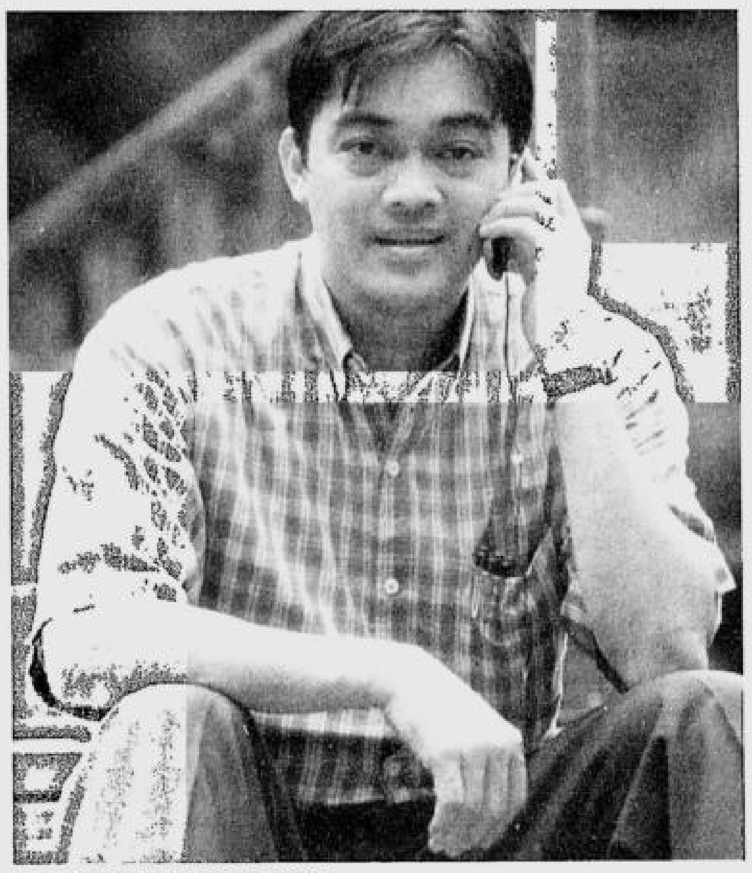
Former Duty Free Philippines general manager Faustino Salud was removed from office and replaced with former Tacloban City mayor Emmanuel Veloso, brother of Leyte Rep. Eduardo Veloso, on Thursday.

This was the second time since December last year that the Palace removed a PTA official, wreaking havoc on the agency.

Nixon Kua was sacked as PTA general manager last month but continues to maintain that his relief by Malacañang was illegal. Kua said Salud, like him, had been appointed to a fixed six-year term and could not be removed without just cause.

Kua, who has gone to court to fight his ouster, ordered PTA officials and employees not to obey a memorandum issued by his Palace-appointed successor, Robert Dean Barbers, terminating 27 employees.

The dismissals, Kua said, were illegal because he was still the PTA chief until the Court of Appeals rules on his petition.



PRESS SEC IN WAITING JOAN BONDOC

Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza sits on the steps of a Quezon City restaurant as he prepares to assume his new post as Press Secretary next week.

Sacrifice on the altar of national unity

From page A1

cause her stunning decision not to stand for election fundamentally reshaped the political landscape leading up to 2004, or possibly, even beyond her presidency.

To say that her decision is a "turning point" in Philippine politics is to understate its significance. She said she performed a political sacrifice by renouncing election, and she invoked the sacrifice of the national hero to spark the struggle for national independence to give it historical symbolism.

This time, her struggle is dedicated at the altar of building a strong state, unshackled by vested interests which historically have dominated political outcomes and the distribution of wealth in Philippine society.

New directions

The new directions she has set are (1) strengthening the national economy, (2) healing the deep divisions within our society, (3) and working for clean and honest elections. This is the blueprint of the new agenda that is designed to create the foundation of a "strong republic," the philosophical obsession of her presidency. From this framework will spring the series of focused reform initiatives she is expected to unveil in the next few weeks.

The President's withdrawal underlined the element of surprise as a defining factor in Philippine politics. Prior to the announcement, pollsters had already made configurations of possible presidential contenders.

Her decision wiped off the board these scenarios, emphasizing the fact that in Philippine politics experts cannot pigeon-hole political developments. Politics are volatile in a political system where institutions of democracy are weak, making way for personalistic politics and political instability.

New agenda

By withdrawing, President Macapagal has drawn a new agenda for politics with revolutionary consequences. Specifically, she has removed herself from the center of conflict and line of fire, and this has lost the carping opposition members a target for political flogging.

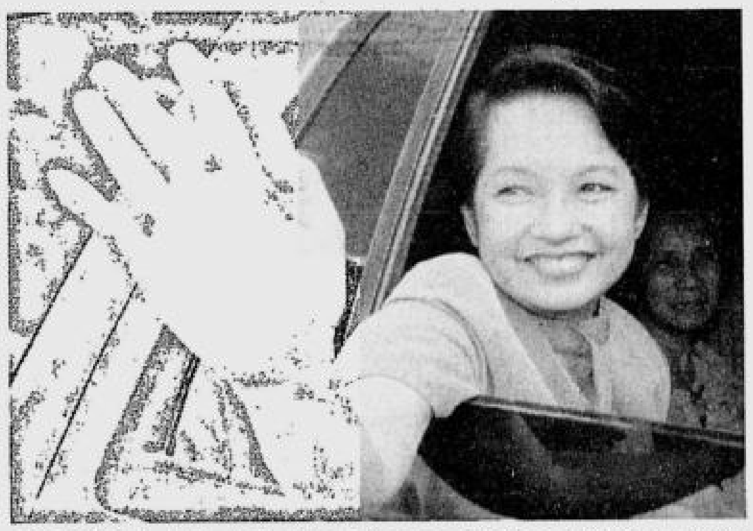
She is trying to redefine the rules of politics and even its culture that makes our politics unruly and ungovernable. It is in this prospective sense of reshaping the culture of politics that she won the Filipino of the Year award.

She could succeed at least in laying the foundation of the political cultural revolution but she could also perish with it. Reformist revolutions have been known to devour their creators.

Against tradition

Her withdrawal can be better appreciated if we consider that it stood on its head a Philippine political tradition that no president of this country had ever given up the opportunity to seek reelection within the mandated tenure of the Constitution.

In shedding herself of the ambition for a full six year-term, the President believed she had emancipated herself from the compromises involved in seeking political support, giving her autonomy, space and focus in carrying out economic and political reforms that had been stymied during the last two years of political bickering and venomous divisions.



GOODBYE to all that. President Macapagal flashes a winning smile in this file photo. DENNIS SABANGAN

Her withdrawal echoes her last-minute resignation in October 2000, from the Estrada Cabinet as secretary of social welfare. She announced her defection only after increasing pressure from her party mates and the protesters in the streets demanding that she had to reveal her true colors lest she might miss the bus.

Rallying point

She was then seen by the Estrada-resign movement as the fig leaf of constitutional legitimacy because she was next in line for succession. She quit, but she was transformed as the rallying point of the protest movement.

Ms Macapagal took up the presidency following the toppling of President Joseph Estrada through the unconventional method of People Power—described by the Western press as "mob rule." Estrada, who won with a large plurality in 1998, served only for two years and six months of his mandated term of six -years.

2 Presidents

And yet, this term had been plagued by mishaps that his successor, whose legitimacy derived from authoritative Supreme Court rulings, had lost appetite for the presidency and is willing to give up power after filling Estrada's gap. This gave us the unique experience of two presidents spanning a single presidency.

What concerns Filipinos most about the withdrawal of President Macapagal is the new direction of politics post-Dec. 30—not the negligible accomplishments of the Macapagal administration in 2002. The past year had become predictable. The dominant landscape was about ceaseless conflict and national divisions. The administration was rocked and damaged by scandals on corruption, albeit not serious enough to spark another impeachment move or hale any senior administration official to court over corrupt practices.

Until her announcement; no potential presidential contender had showed a significant lead in the opinion polls taken prematurely—two and a half years before the next elections.

Economy, foreign policy

The economy was performing moderately well, with GDP growth rate of nearly four percent last year. In the area of foreign policy, the administration had a decisive grip and set firm directions in the alignment of the Philippines with the US-led campaign against international terrorism, including support for the United Nations Security Council resolution that sent back UN inspectors to scrutinize Iraq's facilities for producing weapons of mass destruction.

This policy of close collaboration with the United States paid off when the joint exercises of Filipino and American troops in the first half of 2002 led to the killing of Abu Sayyaf leaders and putting the renegade terrorist bank on the run.

But cracks exposing the fragility of President Macapagal's political skills and control appeared by mid-year when a deadlock in the Senate enabled the opposition to grab the Senate leadership for a few weeks and held hostage key legislation. Even though the administration regained control by July, the President's political skills were shown to be inadequate to forge a consensus of her legislative agenda and her political judgements appeared flawed and even immature.

Storm warnings

Storm warnings came in the middle of the year when her popularity ratings began to plunge and her business confidence index tumbled to new lows largely because of perceived economic distress, allegations of corruption and law and order problems. That she took office at the tailend of the 1997 Asian financial crisis, and in the midst of a global economic downturn, aggravated by the uncertainties over the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, hampered economic recovery efforts.

Doubts about her ability to manage the financial affairs of the nation emerged over the spiralling of the budget deficit, which had the effect of inhibiting pump priming efforts needed to create jobs, fund projects and built patronage that can be used for seeking votes in 2004.

Still ahead

Except probably for the strong performance in foreign policy, where she has proved to have a firm grasp and control, regardless of whatever the nationalists and the leftists thought, the administration's 2002 score book had few highlights of spectacular success.

According to the President, she had thought about the seemingly insurmountable odds weighing down her presidency as early as 10 months ago. She told the INQUIRER in an interview that she even considered the opinion of not seeking election. If she did, the decision to withdraw was an agonizing ordeal.

Empirically, the odds were stacked up against her chances of getting elected. With her falling popularity, there was no way that she could reverse the plunge, unless she made a dramatic, unorthodox decision. If this were the case, her withdrawal was a strategic retreat and was a wise move to cut losses while she is still ahead,.

FVR sees 'nothing new' in council

From page A1

on their standard-bearer in 2004.

Reiterating that he did not want to run for president again, he said his party mates should first help Ms Macapagal succeed in her plans for the remainder of her term.

The Council of State as a means to ensure Ms Macapagal's success has the support of Raul Roco, former education secretary and current leading aspirant for the presidency.

In a letter to the President sent yesterday through Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, Roco said: "On behalf of Aksyon Demokratiko, please accept our support for the reported Council of State as a vehicle for national unity."

He submitted the names of Aksyon Demokratiko chair and co-chair Dr. Jaime Galvez-Tan and Evergisto Macatulad as party representatives to future meetings of the Council of State.

He said either of the two could attend council meetings upon the President's invitation if she found Aksyon Demokratiko's help "useful and necessary."

In a chance interview with reporters after emerging from the Wednesday-night meeting chaired by the President, Sen. Juan Flavier said party leaders raised "ideas on procedures ... for the selection of a standard-bearer" but that "nothing definite" was reached.

"There was no agreement that the standard-bearer should come from Lakas," Flavier said in response to questions regarding the party's top candidate.

At the meeting, Ms Macapagal reportedly reiterated to her party mates that she would not run in the 2004 elections.

Lakas will choose its standard-bearer between December 2003 and January 2004.

The Reporma and Promdi parties, partners of Lakas in the administration's People Power Coalition, recently endorsed Roco as a common candidate of the Edsa II forces.

With the President's declaration that she would not run in 2004, Roco has said he would seek the support of the People Power Coalition in aspiring to be named Lakas standard-bearer.

And Roco's letter, apart from indicating that rapprochement was at hand between him and the President, appeared to be a request for the President's endorsement of his candidacy.

Roco said Aksyon Demokratiko believed in giving priority to the youth and women, empowerment through education, a vibrant environment, the rule of law and equal opportunity for all.

"We offer these terms of reference in the hope you will appreciate our continued effort to help our people," he said.

As a concrete gesture of support, Roco suggested that Tan, a former health secretary, or Macatulad serve as his representative at meetings of the Council of State.

"You will recall they represented Aksyon in the multi-party meetings of the year 2000-2001," he said, referring to the tumultuous period that saw the impeachment and ouster of then President Joseph Estrada.

Roco resigned with bitterness from the Department of Education last Aug. 13 after Malacañang forwarded to the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission a complaint filed against him by DepEd employees.

He then accused the Palace of stabbing him in the back and has since become a vocal critic of the administration. *With a report from Donna S. Cueto*

RP-NDF peace talks dead–Joma

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

SISON

LUCENA CITY—Communist leader Jose Ma. Sison said yesterday prospects for the resumption of peace talks between the government and the insurgents are dead.

"In view of the arrogance and intransigence of Ms Macapagal-Arroyo and the militarists around her, the resumption of the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations has become uncertain, if not categorically impossible," said Sison, founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines, in a statement e-mailed to the INQUIRER from Utrecht, The Netherlands.

Sison added: "The GRP (Government-Republic of the Philippines) officials most culpable for puppetry, plunder and brutality are the most opposed to the peace negotiations." He did not identify the officials, however.

On Tuesday, the Cabinet oversight committee on internal security (COCIS) laid out a four-point "non-negotiable basis" for a unity government—adherence to the Constitution, national sovereignty, territorial integrity and the rule of law.

The conditions, in effect, contravened House Speaker Jose de Venecia's idea of including Sison in a "unity government."

To that, Sison retorted that the National Democratic Front-Philippines (NDFP), the umbrella organization of the communist insurgents, "has never expressed any interest in joining such a sham national unity government."

"But the highest officials of the regime make it a point to stress that the NDFP is barred [from participating], unless it gives up its revolutionary principles and arms," he said.

"In so short a time, the regime has interpreted the concept of a national unity government to be a council of state, no different from the old national security council. It is an exclusive club of exploiters and oppressors, put together by the queen and her 'men in black' in the Cabinet oversight committee on internal security," the CPP founder said.

Earlier, Sison had told the INQUIRER that government peace panel chair Silvestre Bello III had not contacted Luis Jalandoni, NDFP negotiating panel chair, since the headlines trumpeted a national unity government.

"The people should know that despite all the propaganda about 'national unity,' the GRP has not seriously approached the NDFP," he said.

Sison said that even if the President was reported to have approved the proposal [to include the NDFP], she continues to be held hostage by militarist and rabid US puppets within her administration.

He said the pro-US militarists in the administration, "upon whom Ms Macapagal has become so dependent, are openly boasting that there will never be any formal talks between the GRP and the NDFP, unless the latter accepted a "final peace agreement" unilaterally drafted by the Cabinet oversight committee on internal security."

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Unsolved murders

EDITORIAL

POLICE Officer 2 Tomas Sarmiento broke down when he was arrested in Cebu Monday for his alleged participation in the abduction and murder of public relations man Salvador Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito, in November 2000. Now he could be jumping with joy for just being alive. The man tagged by government investigators as the mastermind in the twin killings, Chief Supt. Teofilo Viña, is dead, killed Tuesday night by a lone gunman who emptied his pistol on the body of the former chief for the Visayas of the Estrada-era Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF).

The last time the Filipino public heard about the Dacer-Corbito case, the Court of Appeals had just ordered that Viña and two other former top officials of the PAOCTF, Senior Superintendents Michael Ray Aquino and Cesar Mancao, be included among those charged with double murder. That brought up the number of the accused to 22, including 13 policemen. The Department of Justice said then that Aquino and Mancao were considered fugitives from justice, having fled the country shortly after Joseph Estrada was ousted from the presidency in January 2001. Viña was reported to have disappeared.

Now it turns out that a fourth suspect had also managed to dodge detention. This was Sarmiento. Guess where he was? In Cebu City, continuing to perform his regular duties as a member of the police force and drawing his pay, of course. Upon his arrest, Sarmiento protested that he thought he had already been cleared of involvement in the double murder case. How he got that impression, he didn't say, but obviously his immediate superiors also thought the same way. So much for police efficiency.

And where was Viña all this time? He must have been on the wanted list after making himself scarce following the court order for his indictment. But there he was, working at the Cavite provincial capitol as chief of the civil security unit. It wasn't exactly a clandestine job, but he might as well have gone into hiding in Siberia. He had not fled to parts unknown, but nobody in authority thought of locking him up behind bars, like the rest of the suspects. Nobody, including Gov. Irineo Maliksi who must have heard about the key role Viña was suspected of playing in the well-publicized double murder case but still hired him.

Of course, Viña's killing might have been entirely unrelated to the Dacer-Corbito murder. The absence of treachery or guile seems to suggest that it was a crime committed with little preparation or premeditation.

Still one thing is certain: Somebody out there is breathing easier now that Viña is gone. And that somebody is the real brains behind the Dacer-Corbito murder.

Government investigators said Viña was on top of the whole operation, supervising it from the time surveillance began up to the abduction and the murder by strangulation of the two men. But that hardly qualifies him as the mastermind. One key element is missing here: What was his motive? He had no score to settle with Dacer. He had no personal interest in seeing him dead.

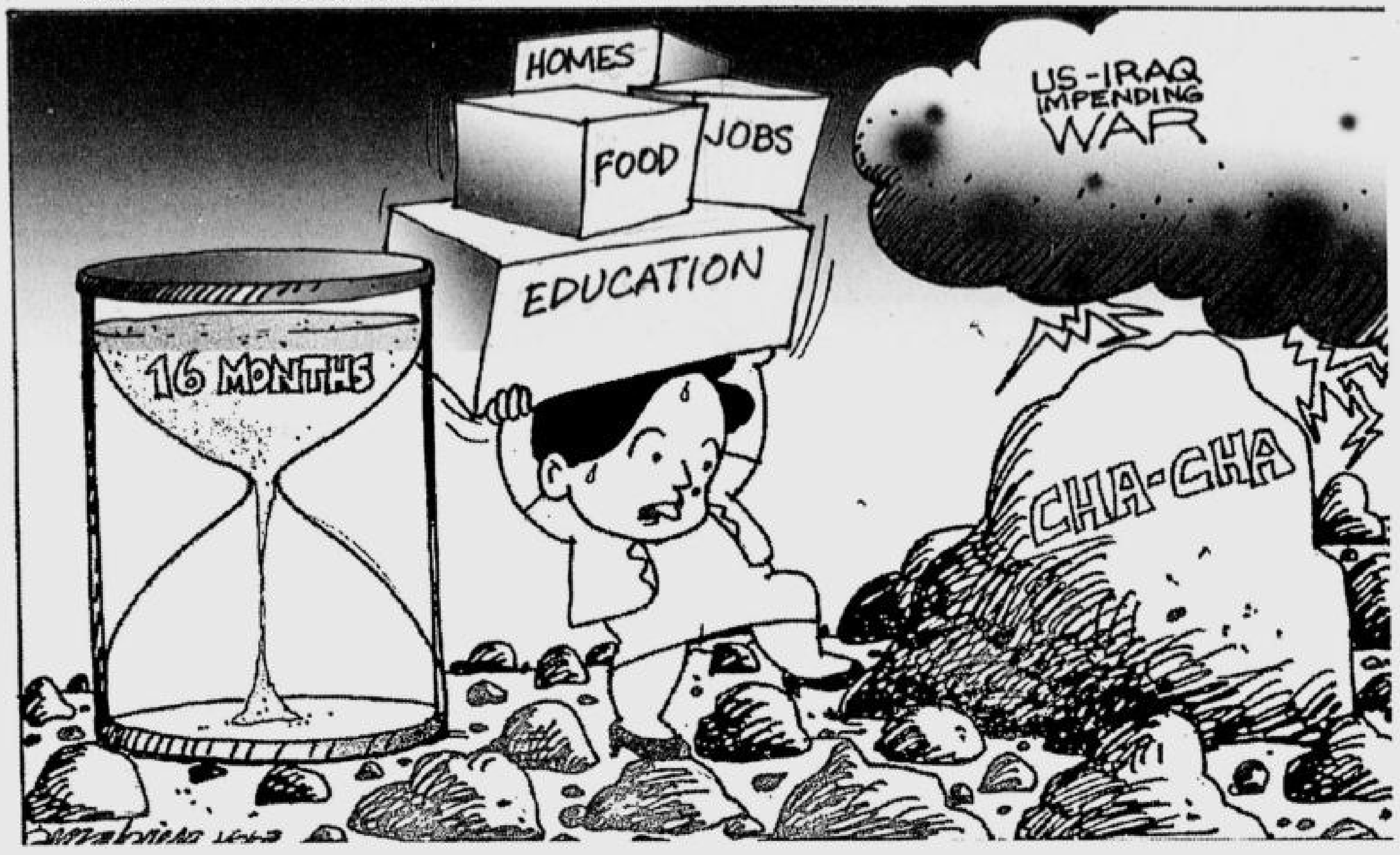
But Viña was a loyal soldier, trained to follow orders. So who put him up to it?

Dacer had enemies, some of them in very high places. After his death, there were talks that he had documents damaging to the Estrada administration. It was widely believed that somebody close to Estrada ordered Dacer's murder.

This is better than any other theory put forward to explain the double murder. But Viña's death virtually rules out the possibility of getting that theory confirmed. Unless there is somebody higher who knows as much as Viña about the whole operation.

But whoever he is, he would be well advised to watch his back all the time. And so should the others who are now in the hands of the police. So many key figures in controversial cases have been ending up dead lately that it is beginning to look as if there is a gang war going on. The only difference is that police and military officers are the ones being killed. But like other cases, they are not being solved.

Police inefficiency and incompetence must have grown so bad that they cannot give justice to even one of their own. One year after, they haven't caught the principal suspect in the killing of Baron Cervantes, spokesman of the Young Officers Union. They are still looking for clues that would help them identify the killer of Supt. John Campos. Now they have the gunman who shot Viña, but it would be interesting to see how they will manage to bungle this investigation.



It's the people, not the system, that is wrong

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

IT is clear why congressmen want a constituent assembly to change the Constitution and why the senators don't want it. All have selfish motives but the congressmen more so. The House wants a shift to the parliamentary system because its ambitious members who want to be head of government know they have no chance of attaining that in a presidential system. In a parliamentary system, however, a member of Parliament elected by a few thousand votes of his constituents can be elected prime minister by a majority of his fellow MPs. The Senate, on the other hand, doesn't want a unicameral system because then it would be abolished.

I already said in a previous column (As I see It , 1/3/03) why a parliamentary system won't work in the Philippines. Graft and corruption would be worse. Thievery by the party in power is bad now but it would be colossal in a parliamentary system.

The head of the government is the prime minister who is not elected directly by the people. He is elected by his fellow MPs. He will stay in the saddle only for as long as he controls enough MP votes. Therefore, he has to keep his MPs happy. And you know how they—who are really only the present congressmen—can be kept happy. Where would the money to buy that happiness come from? From the taxpayers of course. We have seen how corruption so permeated the ruling party of the Japanese Diet (Parliament) that two former prime ministers were prosecuted for the bribery.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said we have "too much politics which is hampering the development of the country." In a parliamentary system, there would be even more politics as the PM stays in power only for as long as he has the confidence of parliament. Therefore, opposition MPs would always be trying to unseat the PM and the latter would be constantly trying to control his forces. That's politics in action.

The PM is kept in power by the votes of the MPs from his party or from a coalition of parties. The political parties should be distinct from one another by their party platforms, ideologies, principles and programs of government. MPs are voted upon by the people for their party platforms, not by the personalities of the candidates. And the MPs are loyal to their parties. Those are key to a parliamentary system.

In the Philippines, however, political parties are indistinguishable from one another. They have no platforms, principles and programs of government. Politicians are political butterflies who flit from one party to another at their convenience.

And the candidates are chosen not on the basis of principles but on the basis of looks and popularity.

When parliament loses confidence on the PM or he recommends its dissolution, there has to be a new election of MPs nationwide. This can happen every year or more often. Can you imagine the cost of yearly elections here?

And considering that members of the Cabinet come from the ranks of the MPs, there would be continuous changes of executive leaders and disruption of work in the bureaucracy.

I agree with reader Archimedes S. Marquez that "the parliamentary system has long historical roots in the countries employing it," a history that the Philippines doesn't have. "It is a product of evolution, not an artificial creation of a contemporary decision."

Marquez wrote: "Most countries using the system were then governed by monarchies. The parliament, conceded by the sovereign to still the restive subjects, initially provided a semblance of check and balance of the monarchy.

"Through evolution or revolution (as what happened in France), the parliament gradually acquired greater powers than the monarch, who remained titular head in deference to the country's tradition.

"We can find no such development in Philippine history."

Thus, our congressmen who are pushing for a change to a parliamentary system do not know what they are talking about. They are pushing for Charter change because of selfish interests. Once a constituent assembly changes the constitution, it would remove term limits and the provisions against political dynasties. And it would change the system of government into parliamentary. When that happens, we would all be at the mercy of the MPs as members of the Cabinet would also be MPs. The legislature and the executive department would be both in the hands of the majority party. There would be no check and balance.

I am glad that a majority of the senators are against it. But I am surprised that there are senators, who should know better, who favor it after being talked to by Malacañang emissaries. Which is an indication that this cha-cha business has the support of Malacañang.

The President is squandering the goodwill that she earned for deciding not to run in the 2004 elections. But she is rapidly losing that goodwill and the people's trust—by not putting her foot down on the excessive politicking being done by her partymates. She should exercise leadership now of the nation and of her party. She should not anoint a presidential candidate or express preference for anyone. She should be totally apolitical to be remembered well by history.

The presidential system is not perfect but it is a good system for us. We have had a number of good presidents under that system. We experimented with the parliamentary system during the Marcos regime and ended up with a dictator who abused us.

There is nothing wrong with the presidential system; what's wrong are the people we elect. If we have a parliamentary system but elect the same people, we would still have a rotten government.

Dear Ms President

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

FIRST off, I must say again that I share the country's sense of relief, even enthusiasm, over your decision not to run in the next elections. Coming as it does a month before the second anniversary of Edsa II, it offers a good opportunity to look back at the events of the past, and quite possibly yoke the direction of the future to the spirit of that past. At the very least, while your decision may not solve all the problems of governance, or indeed dispel the charges that have been hurled against your official and personal family, it offers breathing space to reaffirm old ideals and stoke anew public trust.

And so while your people are slinking away one by one—this is the best time to know who your friends really are, they were never the people who threw faint praise your way—I am compelled by the weight of your choice, whatever the circumstances it was made in, to fly to your side. It is in this light that I beg you to reconsider your position on the American-sponsored "war against terror," particularly given US Undersecretary of State John Bolton's visit to this country to solicit, or conscript support for the impending American invasion of Iraq. Your position in the past has been to bind the nation to uncritical support for the American cause, indeed to rally our neighbors behind it. That position can only bring incalculable harm to us.

Not the least of them physically and immediately. The situation of the five Filipinos who were wounded in a terrorist attack in Israel must show how vulnerable we are to acts of violence abroad. The five of course were not the express targets of the suicide bombings, they were accidental victims, or to use an ugly phrase invented by the Pentagon, "collateral damage." That may not long remain so if we adopt a belligerent attitude toward an Arab country that not quite incidentally has been host to a sizable number of Filipino workers abroad. That attitude deliberately invites ill-will toward Filipinos not just from Iraqis but from Arabs generally.

At the very least, that could result in discrimination against our nationals. Why should the Arab countries want to hire a people, however talented, whose government openly displays the most hostile attitudes toward them? At the very most, that could make the Filipinos in the Middle East targets for terrorist attacks. Support for the American war turns them into combatants, or fair game. For let us make no mistake about it, an American attack on Iraq will not be seen as anti-Iraq, it will be seen as anti-Arab, or worse, anti-Muslim. The surveys showing widespread antipathy toward America in the Muslim countries since George Bush Jr. started rattling the saber against Saddam Hussein, including Turkey, the staging ground for the war, give unmistakable proof of it. We have more than three million overseas workers, a great many of them in the Middle East. What we should be doing is joining the rest of the world, not least of them the Vatican, in bidding the madness at Washington to stop.

But far more than the physical, there is the incalculable moral harm support for the American war in Iraq will wreak upon us. I can only hope you have not come to believe in your own press release—dished out by the same people who are abandoning you now—that the Asean and Apec communities are deeply impressed by your pitch for the world to pitch wagons around George Bush. Any Filipino who has visited an Asean country lately will know that Bush cannot count on any support for his war against Iraq among the people there. Indeed, he will know that Bush cannot count on any support for his concept of "war against terror" among the leaders there.

The impending war on Iraq is immoral by any standards—such as any war can be moral—save by the ones known only to George Bush, Donald Rumsfeld and Ariel Sharon. It is not merely that there is no evidence to bolster Washington's case against Iraq, as the head of the UN International Atomic Energy Agency has reiterated recently. It is not merely that Iraq is being accused of harboring weapons of mass destruction by a country that has enough weapons to destroy the planet a thousand times over. It is also that a war on Iraq will mean the slaughter by "smart bombs" of tens of thousands of men, women and children whose only crime is that they have not very smartly ousted—or assassinated, as several American officials have openly suggested—their leader.

To support that war is not to take the side of the good. It is to stand at cross-purposes with humanity, in all the senses of that word.

I agree Ms President that we have a long and abiding friendship with America. (Though that should never blind us to the violent origins of that friendship or to its often lopsided nature.) I agree that we should treasure and keep that friendship. But only with the America of the founding fathers. Only with the America that Mark Twain and other libertarians tried to defend from fellow Americans who believed in civilizing the world with a Krag. Only with the America that the antiwar protesters of the 1960s and 1970s tried to defend from fellow Americans who wanted to keep the world safe with napalm. Only with the America that Americans who now cry out, "Not in our name" want to defend from fellow Americans who want the world to run rivers of blood to fight terrorism.

Not the America of William McKinley and Teddy Roosevelt, not the America of Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon, not the America of George Bush, father and son.

Ms President, your decision to not run again has earned you much goodwill from us, the citizens. I pray you do not fritter it as easily and prodigally as George Bush did the one America got from 9/11.

I wish you the best of luck.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

Time for focused action on specific reforms

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

VIN d'honneur is a traditional occasion in which the President of the Republic greets the members of the diplomatic corps in the New Year, in the presence of Cabinet members, members of Congress and the senior bureaucracy. It is hardly the platform from which the President announces new policies.

But yesterday's vin d'honneur at Malacañang was more than a ceremonial event during which champagne is passed around and toasts are offered after the presidential speech. It was held in the midst of extraordinary circumstances and the atmosphere was charged with expectations of policy pronouncements following the watershed decision of the President on Dec. 30 to step down in 2004.

The President delivered an elegantly crafted speech amplifying her withdrawal speech and provided the framework of concrete new initiatives she is expected to unveil today to revive the economy, ensure clean elections in 2004 and heal deep divisions across the nation—which were the main themes of the Rizal Day speech.

The speech yesterday did not spell out the particulars, but I am informed that the nation will be kept on its toes the next few weeks as the administration unfolds concrete programs.

The decision of the President to withdraw from the 2004 elections has broken new ground in Philippine politics and put the nation, as pointed out by the President yesterday, "on the crossroads."

This was the theme of urgency to recast politics emphasized yesterday. "This nation is at a crossroads," she said. "Quite simply, it must reform or perish."

This statement paraphrases what academics and graduate school students often hear being pounded in their ears—"publish or perish." In the sphere of political leadership, this exhortation has a compelling resonance. For the first time since Dec. 30, the President mentioned the word "revolution." She said: "In the vision that guides my administration, I see a country liberated from the grip and greed of the past. I see this happening through a revolution in the way we think and in the way we do politics and economics.

"At the center of this revolution must be a commitment to reforms and to putting the people first. In the debates, no topic shall be sacred, no idea or ideology beyond question. We must keep trying something better and new."

From the speech, we gathered that the President seeks to recast the political culture built on patronage, personalism and rent-seeking, within the next 17 months. This is a formidable goal and one wishes that the President is thinking of fundamental restructuring of the political culture now that she has been liberated from fear of losing votes if she displeased people with tough decisions.

"A true leader of this country cannot afford to play politics anymore and ignore the spreading paralyzing climate of cynicism," she said. The implication of this statement is that she will do in a year and a half what she had failed to do during the past two years. "The measure of an administration's success is not its length but its achievement," she said.

The fact is that, by renouncing her reelection ambitions, the President has ceded ground and has fallen back on the raw powers of the presidency which are available for her to be redeployed to achieve new programs and objectives. The powers of the Philippine presidency are vast. While they are defined by the Constitution, the boundaries of how far power can be exercised are unmarked. She can test the extent of these powers and the only restraint is how far can they be exercised until they encounter resistance and are challenged in the courts. But redeployment of presidential powers is not for the timid. If the President is timid, fearing that decisions are going to run into tests of legality, these powers can never be used as instruments to push reforms.

In taking aim at reducing the powers of vested interests blocking the state in asserting its autonomy in making decisions in favor of the larger public interests, the President after Dec. 30 is flexing her muscles against vested interests which are less concentrated than during the presidency of her father. President Diosdado Macapagal took on the oligarchy anchored on landed interests and the burgeoning manufacturing and industrial sector when they were linked to embedded political power. Following the country's industrialization and economic expansion, new economic power centers have emerged and this diffusion of power gives the presidency space and scope in overcoming resistance to reforms she plans to undertake in the next 17 months.

What yesterday's speech was is a nuanced presentation of the opportunities and areas for reform that have been opened by shedding herself of the ambition to seek reelection. What the speech lacks is a concrete demonstration of political will that will be needed to push specific reforms. As has been pointed out earlier, this is no longer the time for micro-economic frameworks. That framework has been established. This is the time for focused action on specific reforms, especially in the economy, and we should therefore expect an action government rather than a government in the permanent state of planning. There is no time left to squander on plans. As the World Bank president said when he visited Manila during the last days of the Estrada administration, Filipinos are brilliant at planning but they have yet to prove they are as good in the execution of plans.

How we treat foreigners

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

A MALAYSIAN businessman finds out that his investments in the firm of a friend, who allegedly has "connections" with a high government official, have been diverted to other businesses. When the Malaysian investor raises concerns about the propriety of such a practice, he suddenly gets a summons from the Bureau of Immigration. Were it not for the intervention of a broadcaster friend, the Malaysian would probably have been deported. This would have meant closing down his main business, the manufacture of office furniture, which employs hundreds of Filipino workers.

The involvement of the BID in what is essentially a business dispute could have meant not just the loss of one investor, but unemployment for hundreds of workers and hardship for their families.

Unfortunately, this Malaysian businessman's is one of only a few such stories which end happily. A foreign resident says that inquiries made with the American and European Chambers of Commerce "will reveal that deportation of foreigners is a tactic often employed by Filipinos to avoid business differences or legal disputes, and contributes to the Philippines' reputation for lawlessness."

I grew up hearing stories about how Indians and Chinese in this country are often made milking cows (*"gatasan"* in the vernacular) by authorities, be they immigration agents, BIR examiners or even lowly police. Because Philippine laws on immigration and citizenship are so stringent, foreign residents often have to settle for temporary arrangements, leaving them vulnerable to seasonal extortion activities.

And don't think the stories of how the Philippine government treats foreign investors and residents remain here. Such tales also reach their friends and relatives back home. It isn't just the Abu Sayyaf and the kidnap-for-ransom syndicates who're driving away foreign investments.

* * *

BY ANY measure, Sandra Carvalho Ocier could not be considered a foreign "investor," unless you count three young sons and a wide social network as investments in this country. Certainly, she has no wish to leave the country, in fact, she desperately wants to remain here for leaving the Philippines would mean losing her boys entirely.

For almost seven years now, Sandra has been a respondent in a civil case involving the annulment of her marriage to Henry Ocier, a younger brother of businessman Willy Ocier, lately of Belle Resources and Tagaytay Highlands, and implicated in several suspect dealings with deposed President Estrada. The Ociers, starting with the patriarch, Benito Tan Guat, are a wealthy and influential Chinese-Filipino family who made a bundle running the "Binondo Central Bank" during martial law.

So when Sandra, a Brazilian who met Henry when she came here for a vacation, decided to contest Henry's "de facto" custody over their three boys, she knew she was pitting herself against not just his family's money, but their power, influence and connections, too.

This column has, through the years, detailed Sandra's struggle to win custody of her sons, or even just the right to see them from time to time. When she began her fight, the oldest of her three boys was barely five. He is now almost 12 years old. No matter how the custody case is decided, and even if she manages to avoid being deported this time, she has already lost her children's childhood.

* * *

RIGHT now, Sandra is in the custody of the BID, and according to a text message I got from her, she heard that she will be transferred to the Bicutan detention center today.

This is the third time that Sandra has been arrested, on grounds of being an "overstaying alien," of finding employment even without a working visa and of failure to post bond. When she was last detained in February last year, she was required to post a P50,000 bond and to leave her passport with immigration authorities. One of the conditions of her release was that she check in with the BID on the first Monday of each month, an obligation she carried out faithfully.

In fact, it was while she was "checking-in" with the BID last Jan. 6 that bureau agents arrested and detained her, citing a judgment for summary deportation which the Board of Commissioners issued last Dec. 3. Since this was the first time that Sandra had heard of the judgment, she naturally protested, as did her lawyer, who at the time had yet to receive a copy of the order.

It's much too complicated to get into the grounds for her deportation, but suffice it to say that, granting, she could have overlooked some bureaucratic requirements, how else could she have remained in this country and supported herself, while she fought for custody of her young sons, if she didn't go out and look for a job? "Would they rather I go around begging?" she once asked me after her last arrest.

* * *

IN THE JUDGMENT signed by all four commissioners, they did acknowledge that "respondent is...impleaded as a party-respondent in a civil proceeding...that involves, among others, the custody of her three minor children by a Philippine spouse. Hence, respondent's summary deportation is abated until the final resolution of this case."

In the following paragraph, however, the BID proceeds to order Sandra's summary deportation and her "exclusion" from the Philippines. Is not the BID in effect "deciding" Sandra's annulment and custody case?

It must be noted that while the annulment case is pending, Sandra and Henry remain married to each other. If even the spouse (albeit estranged) of a Filipino citizen is vulnerable to harassment, how can we expect foreigners to feel comfortable and welcome here?

Unhistorical bits and details that bother

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

THE CONTROVERSY over the recent Film Festival forced me to see the two most-talked about entries "Mano Po" and "Dekada '70" which I will not review since much space has been devoted elsewhere for or against these two films. There are, however, two points I want to get off my chest. First, I never realized how difficult it would be for a Film Festival juror to decide on a mixed-bag of entries. While one can compare and contrast escapist fantasy films: "Agimat ni Lolo" and "Spirit Warriors" you cannot do the same with "Lastikman" and "Dekada '70." If it is hard to compare films that are so different, it is much harder to compare acting performances. Much has been said about Vilma Santos losing out to Ara Mina and I want to add my two cents' worth. After viewing both films, my conclusion is that Santos can surely tackle Mina's role but can Mina do justice to Santos' complex character? But then a die-hard Ara Mina fan would surely reply, can Santos wear Mina's sexy red dress with the open back so low it teases the viewer with a butt crack? Of course, Santos can wear the same thing but the question is—can she get away with it? A die-hard Vilmanian will answer, can Mina, even with a wig, play a mother tormented and confused by martial law? The bottom line is, can we, or should we, compare the proverbial apples and oranges?

My greatest disappointment was not finding a venue in Makati screening "Lapu-lapu." The producers of this film have brought the Film Festival organizers to court and argue that "Lapu-lapu," despite its poor box-office showing, has the most Filipiniana content. From the newspaper ads I knew what to expect of this historical film and I do not care to add to the beating it already got from other reviewers. Lito Lapid was not wearing the historically correct costume. He carries a bad copy of a Kalinga shield when one can order a good reproduction and cheaply, from Baguio souvenir shops. While one can stretch the imagination and think that Lapu-lapu of Mactan used a Cordillera shield, the problem is that he carries it upside down. From this alone I am afraid to see the film and confirm my worst expectations. This brings me to the second point I want to make about the Film Festival entries, there is little or no research involved.

Last Sunday, someone already detailed the production errors of "Mano Po," I will add just one last item they missed out on. I have many friends of Chinese descent, my grandmother was Chinese, and yet nobody I know wears those brocaded silk outfits that can be found in abundance in Hong Kong tourist traps. At most, we wore those imitation-silk brocaded pajamas that were brought home as *pasalubong* from the so-called "Red China store" in Hong Kong. We only wore these when we were children and we never wore Chinese outfits publicly as adults until Shanghai Tang came along and made it trendy. While the intention of the film was to help Filipinos understand the culture that makes Chinoys different, the costumes reinforce misleading stereotype images. Most amusing is the fact that some of the costumes worn by the women in this supposedly rich Chinoy family have a cut that is reserved to amahs or servants. A little research and attention to detail would have gone a long way.

As a historian I am particular about details. Maybe I am nitpicking but having watched Mike de Leon at work on "Bayaning Third World," I realized that most films are careless about details. In "Dekada '70" there is a scene showing a demonstration outside the old Congress, the camera pans over the building and the façade is clearly marked, "National Museum." Surely one can cover the sign with the correct one physically or correct this through a computer during post-production or simply avoid it. It's a negligible split-second, I doubt if most people noticed or even cared, but if we are to believe in subliminal messages or that the eye notices more than we think, then it does matter. To enjoy a film we suspend disbelief, a difficult feat if the film does not cooperate. I could not suspend disbelief when the *mestizo* Penshoppe boy Cogie Domingo tried to pass himself off as a full-blooded Chinese from pre-revolution China. Makeup and heavy accent were not enough. "Mano Po" made me wonder if our pool of talent is so shallow that casting directors have no choice. I was a martial law baby and "Dekada '70" should make me nostalgic, but the actors in those funny wigs made me cringe. Most of the production design here was superb and the flaws I saw were negligible. My favorite, aside from the National Museum passing off as the old Congress occurs in a dramatic part of the movie. Most people were too touched by the scene showing the Bartolome family visiting their son detained in a military camp to notice a glaring gap in continuity. Its supposed to be Christmas Eve and they show this very well, but then two characters go out for a smoke and when they step out of the door, it's bright as day. So, it's night indoors and day outdoors? Maybe it's a visual pun—jail is darkness, freedom is light? Now that's over-reading. Good or bad the film Festival provided entertainment and momentary respite from the depressing state of the country. For this alone I should be grateful, gloss over the flaws and look forward to the next festival.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

Senior moments

HIGH BLOOD

Naty Lapuz Templo

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. **—Ed.**

WHEN you get to this age, friends start keeping tabs on your slips of memory and are quick to diagnose you to have "Sometimer's" (presumably a mild form of Alzheimer's disease), if they catch you at your dullest senior moment.

Forgetfulness is not a monopoly of seniors, you know. I ask my 9-year-old grandson, who is supposed to be a brilliant 4th grader, to pick up his soiled socks from the floor, but after three hours they are still sitting there. When I call his attention to them, he just sheepishly admits, "I forgot."

My thirtysomething daughter rushes out of the front door to be on time for an appointment, and in an hour she calls to say she forgot her driver's license on the dining table, or wherever, and to please take it to her on our way to, say, SM City, a few hundred meters off the track.

Have you ever experienced relating a story to a group of friends, when suddenly your brain's neurons get tangled up and you cannot remember what else to say? This has been happening to me since maybe (blush, blush) 20 or 25 years ago. Sympathetic friends tell me that it could be the effect of the anesthesia administered on me during my child-bearing days.

When I was still working, I would sometimes find my boss engaged in an animated talk with someone in the hall outside of our office. Afterwards he would whisper to me, "Who was that guy?"

Certain factors tend to weaken our thought processes. For instance, when the mind is completely occupied with a mission, problem, project or whatever it can be absorbed in, there may not be any room left for other matters. This could explain my boss' temporary amnesia. I have experienced something similar. Sometimes when I suddenly encounter an old familiar face in, say, the mall (a place I do not usually associate the face with), I have a hard time recalling the person's name and circumstance. Still, to avoid being called snobbish or forgetful, I talk to him or her. Eventually, something said will prick my mind and click the recognition button.

I think, though, that forgetfulness runs in my family. When he was much younger, my brother Lolen was notoriously absent-minded. My mother would ask him to mail a birthday card to a relative abroad, but it would stay in his shirt pocket until it was discovered by the laundrywoman who came to wash our clothes. Now in his mid-70s his memory lapses have worsened slightly. While he could vividly recount his youthful experiences during the Japanese occupation, he often misplaces his eyeglasses, the car keys, the hammer, or the receipt for the pictures that his wife asked him to pick up at a Kodak outlet. He says that he seems to spend more time looking for missing articles than actually doing errands he wants to do in the first place.

Another brother of mine, Dan, marks his calendar with every sibling's or every relative's birthday and wedding anniversary so that he could send them appropriate greeting cards. The cards are purchased a month or so before, prepared with cute little messages and properly addressed. But, calamity of calamities, the cards are still in his desk drawer long after the supposedly memorable day. "I'll send them next year," he remarks dryly when caught with the evidence of his, uh, senior malady. "At least now I'm a full year ahead."

The women in my family seem to fare better in the memory department. A spinster aunt—Heaven, rest her caring soul!—must have had the keenest mind of them all. She always remembered to bring a little surprise for her nieces and nephews on special days. Sometimes we did not have to tell her what we wanted—she quickly sensed our heart's desire and did her best to provide it even before we asked.

But then she never forgot one's faults either, or acts of disobedience, or non-compliance to household duties and stuff like that. When she thought we were guilty of some misdoing, she would let loose a generous amount of reprimands which sounded much like a pastor's impassioned homily on an otherwise boring Sunday noon. The only difference was that hers were usually, at best, recycled from her previous "sermons." Talk of repetition or exercise being an effective way of keeping a sharp mind. Oh, don't get me wrong—I hold my dear departed aunt with the deepest affection and reverence. To this day I treasure the training and advice she imparted. (She used to say, "Someday you will appreciate what I'm telling you." I do, I do.)

Psychologists suggest some methods of "turbo-charging" our memory. One suggestion is to talk aloud to yourself, according to Vicki Haddock in "Tips for a Better Memory." For instance, say "I'm walking upstairs to get my glasses"; "I'm putting my parking ticket in my pocket so I can get it validated"; "I'm going to the store to buy milk and eggs." The problem with this style is that people you meet might think that you have bats in your head.

Another advice is to "use mnemonic tricks—acronyms, rhymes, etc. When tightening or loosening lids, remember 'righty-tighty, lefty-loosey.'" Sounds looney to me.

Still another way, says Haddock, is to "post reminder signs in your house, office or car, such as 'Remember to buy stamps!' 'Remember to take out the garbage on Thursday!'"

At home if my daughters want to get up early some morning (obviously they lack faith in their alarm clocks), they stick little notes for me on my bedroom door at night, saying, for instance, "Please wake us up at 6:15." If they ask me verbally at night (and I'm usually half asleep when they do), there is a great likelihood that I will have no recollection whatsoever of their request.

I see the merits of mental exercise (recommended by psychologists) as a workable way of revving up your brain's engine. Try playing "thinking" games such as chess, bridge, mahjongg and various puzzles, and watching TV game shows. Pretend you are a participant in "Family Feud," "Who Wants to be a Millionaire," "Weakest Link," or "Game Ka Na Ba?" and you may be surprised to realize how much smarter you are than those fumbling, quivering, self-conscious contestants. But don't let that go to your head and sign up for future contests—those spotlights could reveal your true age, one way or the other.

Is tying a red string around your pinky helpful? In my opinion, it might be if you are reminding yourself to buy a spool of red string! I would prefer to write down what I want to remember and avoid getting stumped by that string later on. This is not fool-proof, though, because I could misplace the paper where I wrote down my reminder.

Being forgetful is nothing to be ashamed of or to panic about. Everyone is bound to falter now and then. If you worry about getting Alzheimer's, think of it this way: those afflicted with the disease may actually be so unaware of their condition that they can remain blissfully innocent of what goes on around them. Agree?

Naty Lapuz Templo is in her 60s and retired from government service in mid-1998.

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No 'cha-cha' before 2004

I SALUTE Conrado de Quiros. The second to the last paragraph of his "Fools rush in" column (PDI, 1/8/03) really hit it where it hurts the most about why "cha-cha" for a parliamentary system of government should not be pushed before the 2004 national elections. I say that that is a very strong reason why it should not be adopted by the Filipino people at all.

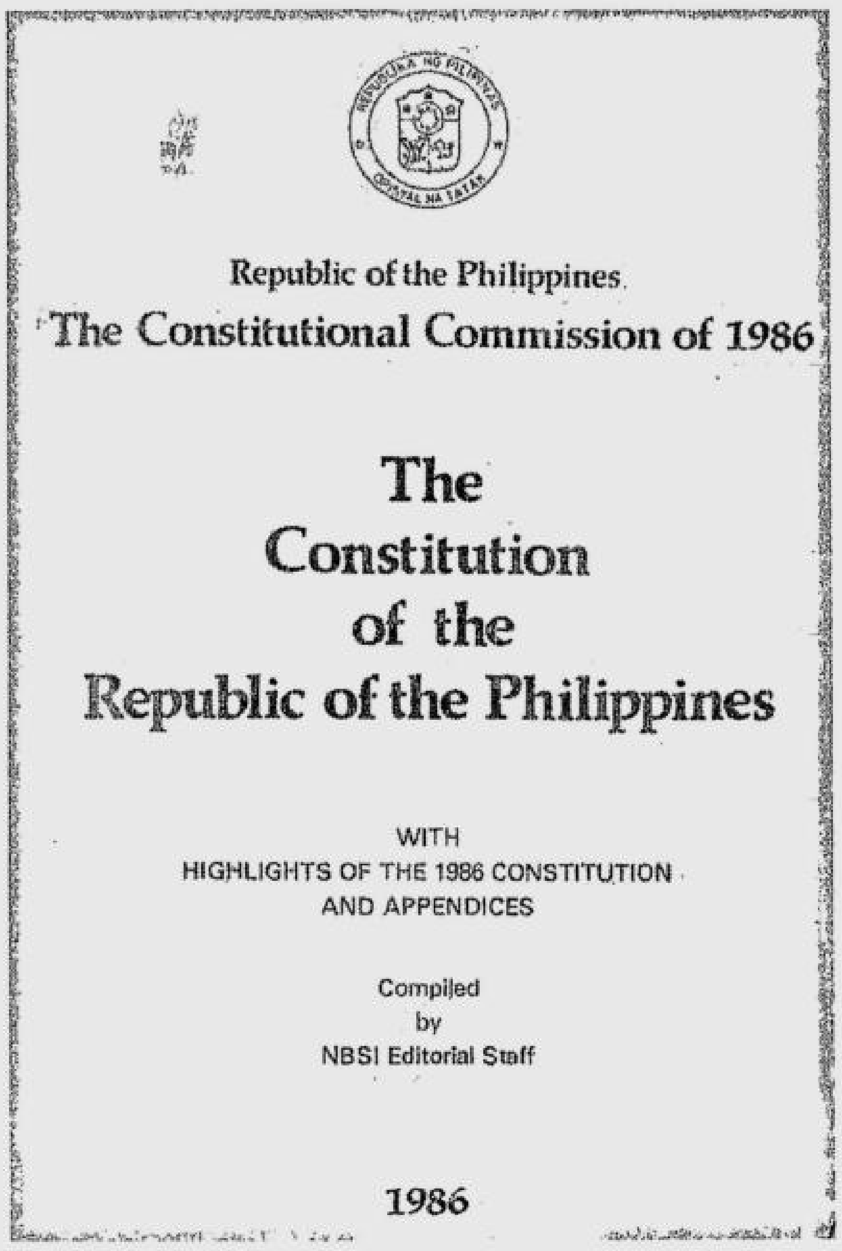
The proponents of the parliamentary system of government say that it will reduce corruption and spur our economy to grow. They miss the point entirely or ambition has made them blind to the truth that no matter what system of government we choose, it will never be equal to rooting out the culture of corruption pervasive in our society. Only a strong-willed and determined leader, whether he or she be a president or a prime minister, can do it. With regard to economic growth, we can change or update our charter without necessarily converting to a parliamentary system.

Can our people not see how congressmen have allocated for themselves millions and millions of pork barrel funds every year, and then delay the passing of the national budget unless the executive department agrees to it? In a parliamentary system of government, they will have their cake and eat it, too. I am not against the parliamentary system of government. Just that the persons spearheading the change are known "*trapos*" and cannot be relied upon to put the Filipino people's interest ahead of their own in their rush to change the Constitution. Also, based on previous elections, it can be seen that the electorate is not mature enough to put persons of unquestioned qualification and integrity in Congress or in other elective offices.

Why not let the Filipino people decide by including a plebiscite in the 2004 national elections to truly determine their preferences on Charter change?

If the results show that the people are agreeable to Charter change, then and only then should we write a new constitution and let it take effect, perhaps in 2010.

—BERNARDO L. NEMIL JR.,
Monserrat Drive, Baliwasan,
Zamboanga City



Republic of the Philippines
The Constitutional Commission of 1986

The
Constitution
of the
Republic of the Philippines

WITH
HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 1986 CONSTITUTION
AND APPENDICES

Compiled
by
NBSI Editorial Staff

1986

Added charges for packages from abroad

I AM a Filipino working in Canada and I've been sending gifts to my family in the Philippines every now and then via registered mail. My family gets them after a long wait and lining up patiently at the post office (can't complain about it!).

But last November my sister got the shock of her life when she went to the Central Post Office and she was told by people who claimed to be employees of the Bureau of Internal Revenue that she had to pay tax for the package I sent her before it would be released. Worse, they wanted her to pay 10 percent of the package's declared value.

My family has been receiving packages I sent without hassle and I did pay for that package before I mailed it. Why did they put all those new regulations in place without informing the people first? Some people are forced to pay up because some of them come from far places and don't want to come back, meaning more travel expenses and spending another day lining up.

My sister saw people bargaining for the release of the package sent by their loved ones working abroad. What is wrong here?

I still hope the government will do something about it!

—NAME WITHHELD ON REQUEST

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Old verities in a new year

MORE refreshing and spiritually more invigorating than the "miracle bath" of former President Joseph Estrada are the thoughts that the New Year brings to us.

Francis Bacon, a British philosopher, once said: "Yesterday is a cancelled check; tomorrow is a promissory note. All you have is today—use it wisely." The biblical psalmist is more to the point when he compared time to the eternity of God in these words: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or everlasting, you are God... For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, like a watch in the night. You carry them away like a flood: they are like a sleep. In the morning it flourishes; it grows up. In the evening, it is cut down and withers."

Human life, just like the growth of civilization, has three stages or dimensions: the past, the present and the future. Standing at the gate of the year, we can see that the past is finished and gone, no amount of regret or remorse can bring back the hands of time. However, history is connected to eternity because nothing ages like the future. Empires and kingdoms rise and fall, they come and go. In fact, the road of the past is pockmarked by noble intentions that have gone awry; motives that are conceived in the sanctuary of the human heart, but which, in the intricacies of history, have been deflected from their idealism.

What about the future? It all depends on how one views life. As the old cliché has it: the pessimist sees a glass of water half empty; the optimist views it as half full. I belong to the second category. Much as the past year has brought us a lot of failures and heartaches, I still believe that there is hope for national recovery and progress.

—REV. SALVADOR D. EDUARTE,
Graduate School Department,
Luna Colleges, Tayug, Pangasinan

Inspired by GMA's statesmanship

WE, the Concerned Women of the Philippines (CWP), hail President Macapagal-Arroyo's decision not to run for the presidency in 2004. We salute her for her unprecedented act of statesmanship and patriotism in putting our country's welfare above her personal ambition.

We believe she has the capability and the competence to govern our country as well as the determination and perseverance to bring about the public welfare we direly need. We are humbled as much as we are inspired by her astounding decision to do our best in all our areas of concern and we pledge our love of country by our commitment of support and cooperation in her new effort.

To emulate her heroic self-sacrifice, we wish to exhort each and every Filipino to wholeheartedly do his share for the good of our country above self. We exhort other government leaders who believe in this same cause but instead dwell in self-interest, selfishness, greed, or even ill-will to finally give our people what is long due them: service in its truest form, given in all honesty, sincerity and dedication. We also call on all our political leaders both in and out of government to heed the call of the President to put a stop to all the politicking for self-interest. We would like to make a special appeal to Speaker Jose de Venecia, who as co-chair and party mate of the President in Lakas, to please refrain from talking politics like he has been doing right after the President's historic announcement, giving everyone the impression that he didn't fully understand the President's message to remove the real poison of politicking in the next 16 months.

Finally, we appeal to the most powerful and influential sector of society: the media. Please use your influence in a more responsible way—objectively, accurately and fairly—and always report the truth no matter who gets hurt. After all, we have only one country and we are all in this together.

Only when we join hands can we have the country that we all can be proud of.

Mabuhay ang Pilipino who does not place self-interest above all else!

Mabuhay tayong lahat!

—EVELYN LAO KILAYKO, chair,
ELIZABETH LORENZANA DIAZ, vice chair,
ESPERANZA B. PATERNO, former chair,
Concerned Women of the Philippines

On the President's not running in 2004

VOICES ON INQ7.NET

THE DECLARATION by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo that she is not running for the presidency in 2004 is unprecedented in Philippine politics. This early announcement definitely shows her statesmanship. She is right to point out that the country needs unity, and unity needs this kind of sacrifice.

The opposition can now only be skeptics. They can either say this is just political gimmickry or this is the President's early surrender to the prospects of a sure loss in 2004. But the message will soon be right on their faces: it is their turn to show statesmanship. If they balk, it will show their true color and they would lose significance in the coming elections.

Obviously this declaration boosted former Education Secretary Raul Roco's chance of leading the 2004 elections. Roco may show his statesmanship, too, by doing a similar pronouncement, but the President's move does not require him to. His position is not too controversial. He can very well be our next President!

Suddenly, "sacrifice" is "in." Politics is "out." At last, there is a chance for this country to improve.

I planned not to vote for Gloria in 2004, if I vote at all. I, like many did, lost my trust in our leaders. Her pronouncement has changed my view.

I thank Gloria for restoring hope for a better future. I congratulate her for showing us what true statesmanship is all about.—**safedudeus**

* * *

Thank you Ate Glo. It's the wisest decision you ever made. You know you're not capable of that job and you did your best. Now let somebody else do it in 2004.—**amoy ong**

* * *

It's now the best time for her to go on full scale photo-ops, infomercials and other gimmicks to increase her popularity. With her no-run declaration, Gloria has a ready excuse against those who would accuse her of electioneering. But when 2004 comes, count on her propagandists to claim that the people want her to run and voila....for the lofty goal of serving the public interest, Gloria would change her mind and run for President. *Ang galing na* strategy, *di ba* (It's a good strategy, isn't it)?

Pardon the cynicism but the reality in politics is that actions cannot be taken at face value without incurring risks.—**conway**

* * *

For politicians, it is an ultimate sacrifice not to seek a reelection. Gloria's decision is a piece of rare wisdom from today's Filipino politicians. Most of us Filipinos can't appreciate the gesture or good deeds of political leaders we don't support or those from other parties. Are we really politically mature enough? This is the very same mentality that drags our country backward. I'm no Gloria fanatic but I do appreciate her decision.—**Yitzhak**

* * *

Three reasons for Gloria to forget 2004:

1. Good for the nation. *Mababawasan ang mga inutil at magugulo sa* 2004 (fewer incompetents and kibitzers in 2004) and hopefully she could at least have real time to be of service to the nation.

2. Good for herself. It's a waste of time, she won't win anyway. It will only put her to shame.

3. Good for her family and political party. *Maaring di na buklatin ang dambuhalang kahihiyan na idudulot ng baho ni* Mike Arroyo (The monstrous scandals of Mike Arroyo may go unexposed).—**Predator**

* * *

I wonder if there is a connection to Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez's pronouncements that he still has more information about corruption in the present government.—**reylyn95**

* * *

The nature of politics as we have seen in the Philippines and also in this forum is negative. I make special mention of the Estrada-Lacson supporters. Their strategy since Sen. Panfilo Lacson does not have anything positive to run on is to demolish the competition by negativity. What Gloria effectively did was take the wind out of the sails of negativity to the point where even Lacson and the opposition have lauded her move. Now the political perspective has to be positive. Example, what has Lacson done for the country? The same question will have to be asked of every presidential wannabe.

When Gloria said she decided not to run in 2004, I take her word for it. That is not to say that she cannot be persuaded to run should the state of the nation improve. Also she said 2004 and not 2010.

The presidential wannabes have a very serious dilemma in the sense that they have to show what they have done and not what somebody else did not do. It will be very interesting to say the least, in 2004.—**carlos**

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Turkish Airlines jet crashes; 75 die

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey—A Turkish Airlines passenger plane crashed in thick fog and burst into flames as it tried to land in southeast Turkey on Wednesday, killing 75 people, officials and witnesses said.

"Some passengers burned to death," Transport Minister Binali Yildirim told reporters.

The plane, which had been flying from Istanbul to Diyarbakir, the capital of the mainly Kurdish southeast, crashed into a field as it made its landing approach. Fierce fire hampered rescue attempts.

Ambulances and fire tenders rushed to the scene and military helicopters hovered overhead playing spotlights on the crash site through thick fog.

Distraught relatives wept and comforted each other at the airport terminal. Others ran out on to the street in panic as police struggled to keep order in sub-zero temperatures.

Rescue forces checked inside the wreckage of the plane for survivors as the flames subsided, but for almost all it was too late. Diyarbakir Governor Ahmet Cemil Serhadli said the plane had broken up and debris was spread over a wide area.

State television showed the shattered remains of the fuselage and engines still smoking amid the fog several hours after the impact.

"There are body parts everywhere. Many of the bodies are burned," another official said.

Turkish Airlines general manager Yusuf Bolayirli said the death toll was 75 and there were five survivors. Some of the survivors were in a serious condition, including a child aged 2 or 3 in intensive care in a Diyarbakir hospital.

At least three foreigners were among the dead. Their nationalities were not immediately known.

"The pilot of the plane did not issue a mayday warning before the crash," an airport official said. Celal Tokmak, a survivor taken to hospital in Diyarbakir, told TRT television he had suffered cuts to the head and bruises as well as burns on his body.

"There was abnormal fog at the airport. I heard a loud explosion right before we were to land, it felt like my ear exploded... I heard a loud explosion after the crash," he said.

"At first I thought there was a war. Is this an attack? I didn't think it was a crash," he said.

The airport in Diyarbakir is a wide expanse of land shared by military and civil air traffic. Civilian flights land more than a kilometre from the main terminal and passengers are carried to and from their flights on buses.

There has been speculation that Diyarbakir airport, within easy reach of the Iraqi border, could be one of those the United States might ask to use for an attack on Iraq. Air defense missiles were deployed there during the Gulf War in 1991.

"I have learned with deep sadness that a THY passenger plane named 'Konya' crashed during an Istanbul to Diyarbakir flight due to extreme fog," Prime Minister Abdullah Gul said, adding there was nothing to indicate an attack of any sort.

The cause of the crash was not immediately clear.

Anatolian news agency said the plane crashed in the military area of the airport. *Reuters*

THE FUSELAGE of a Turkish passenger plane lies wrecked and smoking on the ground after the crash at Diyarbakir airport in southeast Turkey, Jan. 8. REUTERS

21 killed as US commuter plane slams into hangar

WASHINGTON—A twin-engine commuter plane faltered on takeoff from the US city of Charlotte on Wednesday, crashed into an airport hanger and burst into flames, killing all 19 passengers and two crew, officials said.

The Air Midwest Beech 1900 twin-engine turboprop "took off, was unable to maintain altitude, came down and clipped the corner of the US Airways hangar building," said Jerry Orr, director of airport operations at Charlotte/Douglas International Airport in North Carolina state.

"It was a solid hit," John Goglia, an investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), told a press conference at the airport.

One of the 19 passengers was said to have been an 11-year-old boy.

Goglia said a black box believed to be the plane's flight data recorder had been found and was being taken to Washington for immediate analysis. Investigators were still looking for the voice recorder that details the cockpit conversation.

Air Midwest Flight 5481, operating as a US Airways Express flight, had taken off from Charlotte in clear weather, headed for Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport in South Carolina.

The last official communication between the plane and control tower was the clearance for takeoff, officials said. The plane crashed at the 8:45 a.m.

"I'm told that a member of the flight crew declared an emergency seconds before the crash, but I have not yet heard that recording," said Goglia.

The plane hit the US Airways main overhaul hangar at the airport.

Orr said firefighters were unable to immediately retrieve the bodies from the wreckage because of the intense flames.

Officials immediately closed two runways and a large portion of the airport after the crash but later re-opened them.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation was among those investigating the crash.

"At this point, there is no preliminary indication of any terrorist incident," said Chris Swecker, special agent in charge of the FBI's Charlotte field office.

Bart Hargis, a carpool coordinator who was near the hangar, told the Charlotte Observer daily he heard the whine of engines and glanced up.

"The plane was tilted in the air, one wing up and one wing down. When he revved the engine, it twisted. Then the roar stopped and I heard this 'Pow!'"

The explosion was gut-wrenching, said Gary Barrier, who runs an air charter firm.

"We heard the airplane taking off and then we heard the noise—the boom!—and that was it," Barrier told the Observer. "It's just a sickening feeling."

The Beech 1900, manufactured by Raytheon, was carrying its maximum capacity of 19 passengers. *AFP*

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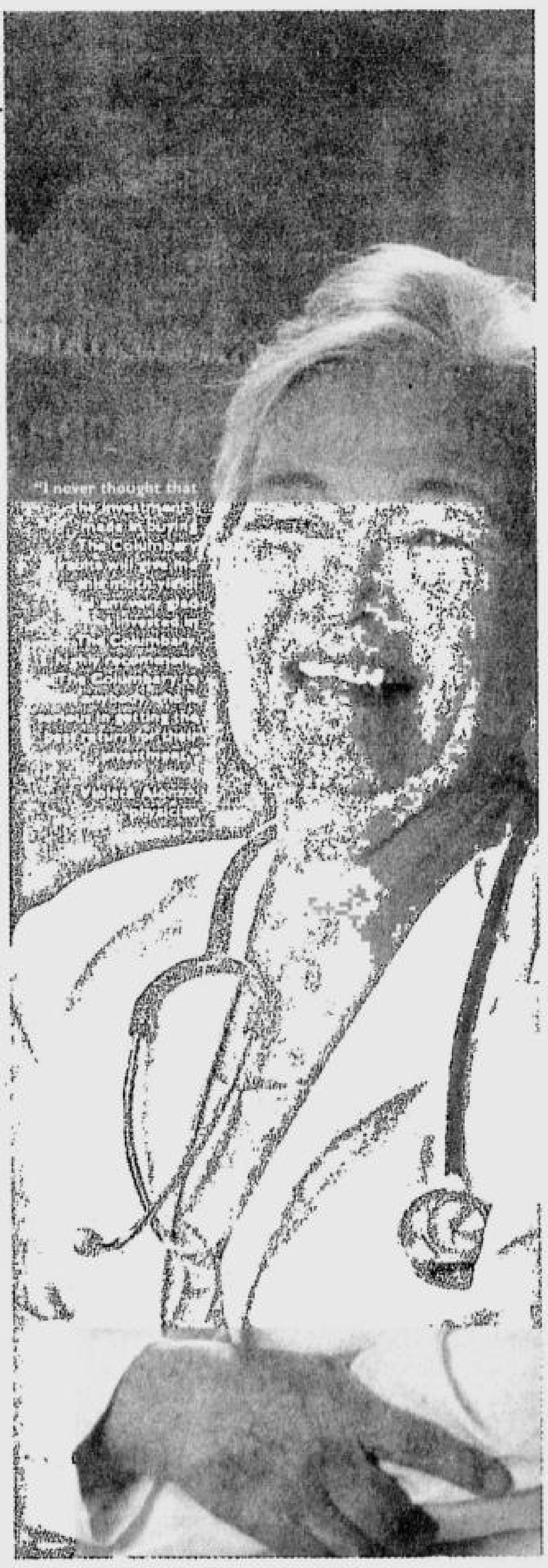

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Britain urges delay in Iraq war until autumn

ENGINEERS of the Commando Brigade Royal Marines exit from a Chinook helicopter during a training exercise in the Omani desert. Britain announced Jan. 7 it planned to deploy a naval force comprising 3,000 Marine commandos and called up 1,500 reservists in readiness for a possible war against Iraq. AFP

LONDON—Britain is urging the US to delay war against Iraq for several months, possibly until autumn, to give UN inspectors more time to provide evidence of arms violations by Baghdad, London's Daily Telegraph reported Thursday.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair's office was not commenting on the report early Thursday.

The assessment given by the right-wing daily comes as chief weapons inspector Hans Blix prepared to deliver an interim report to the UN Security Council on sites so far inspected, prior to delivering a full assessment on Jan. 27.

Meanwhile, British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, in Jakarta for talks with his Indonesian counterpart Hassan Wirayuda and the country's President Megawati Sukarnoputri, said disarmament rather than regime change was the main objective in Iraq and that war could be avoided if Iraqi President Saddam Hussein gave up his weapons of mass destruction.

British ministers and senior officials believe there is no clear legal case for military action despite the build-up of US and British forces in the Gulf, according to the Telegraph.

The paper said that senior diplomats had told the British government there was a good chance of securing United Nations approval for military action later in the year if Saddam could be shown unambiguously to be defying the disarmament conditions set out in Security Council resolution 1441.

A senior government source told the paper that Blair, due to hold talks with the Sultan of Brunei in London Thursday, "has made it clear that, unless there is a smoking gun, the inspectors have to be given time to keep searching."

According to the Telegraph, British diplomats say they can win UN support for war only if the inspectors can corner Saddam, either by finding banned weapons and components or by forcing him to deny access to sites or to officials.

A senior British official said: "There is an assumption that there will be a campaign before the summer because of the heat.

"The autumn would be just as sensible a time and in the meanwhile Saddam would be thoroughly constrained by the inspectors."

Blix will report that inspectors have found no proof to date that Iraq has acquired or is developing weapons of mass destruction, Germany's Tageszeitung daily reported Wednesday.

Citing UN sources in New York, the paper said he would tell a closed-door session of the UN Security Council that such claims—notably from the United States—remained unproven.

London's left-wing Guardian daily reported Thursday that up to 100 British members of parliament could be preparing to rebel against the government, and junior ministers could resign, if war against Iraq started without UN backing. *AFP*

Venezuela bank workers call strike

CARACAS, Venezuela—Venezuelan bank workers on Wednesday called a 48-hour shutdown of banking services this week, escalating a five-week opposition strike that has already crippled the country's vital oil exports.

The bank stoppage call spooked Venezuela's currency market, sending the local bolivar tumbling against the US dollar.

Union leaders said the action by employees at private and state banks across the South American nation would halt services to the public on Thursday and Friday.

"We are calling for a complete banking stoppage," Jose Elias Torres, president of the bank workers' union federation Fetrabanca, told a news conference in Caracas.

Fetrabanca called the work stoppage in support of the grueling strike launched by opposition leaders on Dec. 2 to press leftist President Hugo Chavez to resign and hold early elections. The ongoing shutdown has crippled oil output and shipments by the world's No. 5 petroleum exporter.

The Venezuelan Central Bank's bolivar reference rate against the US dollar closed 5.7 percent down at 1,507/1,510.50 bolivars. The local currency's interbank rate slid by nearly 10 percent against the US greenback to an average low of 1,585 bolivars, traders said.

As the opposition's economic offensive against the populist president increased, so too did tension on the streets. *Reuters*

Saddam has no plans to step down, says Iraqi official

MOSCOW—Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has no plans to resign and seek exile in a country like Russia despite strong hints from the US administration that such a move could avert war, a top Iraqi official said Wednesday.

Abbas Khalaf, Baghdad's ambassador to Moscow, called the US suggestions "completely absurd—nonsense," amid Western press reports that Russian President Vladimir Putin was leading the way in setting up a resignation plan.

A top Russian diplomat also denied that Moscow was trying to persuade the Iraqi strongman to step down by offering him political asylum.

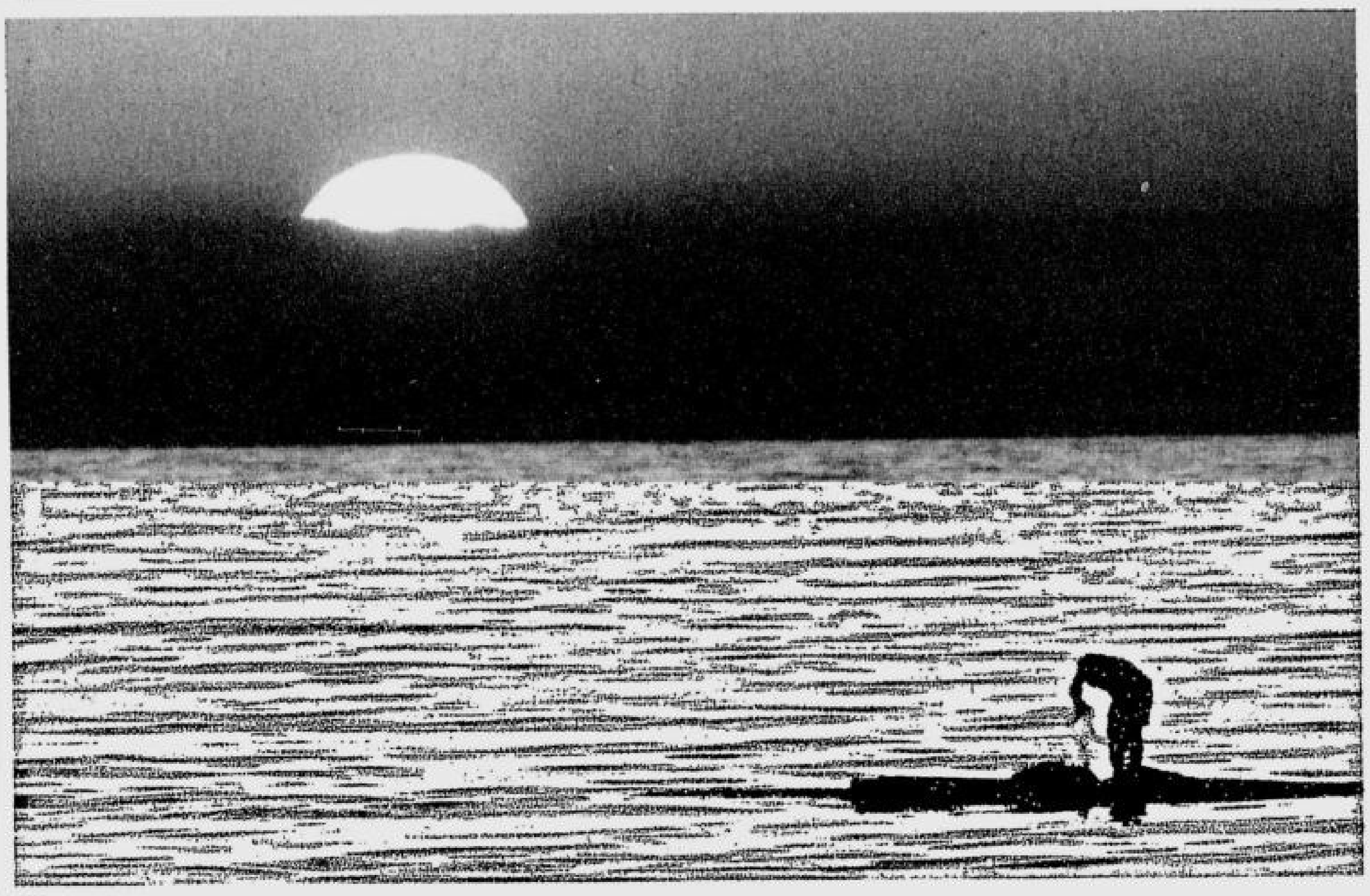
"These are inventions. There is presently no discussion on this subject," the man, who asked not to be identified, said.

Khalaf maintained US officials had "launched this canard after failing in their attempts" to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

"These reports are aimed at inserting a (diplomatic) wedge in relations between Russia and Iraq," Khalaf told AFP.

Khalaf separately told the Interfax news agency that "Saddam Hussein enjoys excellent health, is in a determined mood, in perfect control of the situation and believes in our victory." His comments come amid diplomatic efforts to ease tensions surrounding Iraq, perhaps with the help of Russia or other mediators, which are increasingly focusing on ways to unseat Saddam while giving him a face-saving exit.

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld repeated earlier this week that Saddam's resignation could avert a looming military campaign, which some US news reports suggest could begin in the second half of February. *AFP*



JUST ANOTHER DAY AT THE OFFICE

REUTERS

As the sun sets a fisherman casts his net off the coast of the Lebanese capital Beirut Jan. 8, as balmy temperatures brought fishermen out after a week of cold temperatures.

Pedophile's release spurs uproar

SYDNEY—One of Australia's most notorious pedophiles walked free from prison Thursday after serving a 15-year term despite reports he told fellow inmates he would molest children again.

The release of Dennis Ferguson, 54, outraged child rights advocates and prompted calls for a change in laws to allow for life sentences against dangerous pedophiles.

Within hours the government of the eastern state of Queensland said it would review its legislation to enable the indefinite jailing of criminals considered to be a serious threat to the public.

Prosecutors went to the state supreme court this week and obtained an order forcing Ferguson to report his whereabouts to police for the next 15 years.

The application to the court said Ferguson refused to take part in rehabilitation programs while at Wolston jail and had tried, through freedom of information legislation, to obtain police pictures of his victims.

Affidavits from fellow inmates submitted as part of the case quoted Ferguson as saying that once released, he planned to molest the eight-year-old daughter of the family with whom he was to live after jail.

Ferguson was convicted in 1988 of kidnapping a six-year-old girl and her two brothers, seven and eight, taking them to a Brisbane hotel motel and raping and molesting them for three days. *AFP*

India tests missile capable of carrying nuclear warhead

NEW DELHI—India on Thursday test fired a shorter-range version of its nuclear-capable Agni missile, capable of striking almost anywhere in Pakistan, that analysts said would boost its defenses against its nuclear-armed neighbor.

The test at a remote site in eastern Orissa state over the Bay of Bengal "was a textbook launch, everything went perfectly," a senior defense official told Reuters in New Delhi.

The ballistic missile test, one of a series planned in coming days, followed the exchange of tough nuclear rhetoric earlier this week by India and Pakistan, which nearly went to war last year over the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir.

Pakistan's Foreign Ministry said the test, watched by Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes, came as no surprise as New Delhi's "nuclear and missile ambitions were well known." The surface-to-surface Agni model, which can carry a nuclear warhead, is the backbone of India's efforts to build a credible self-defense strategy against nuclear-armed Pakistan and China.

Agni-1 has a one-ton payload capacity and can be fired from rail and road launchers, making it highly mobile.

"The test is one more step in enhancing India's overall weapons of mass destruction capability," said Uday Bhaskar, deputy head of the government-funded Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses.

Earlier this week, Fernandes said India would destroy Pakistan in any reprisal against a Pakistani nuclear attack.

His statement came after Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf said the threat of a "non-conventional war" helped avert a conflict between the two neighbors last year over Kashmir.

Musharraf's spokesperson swiftly denied that the Pakistani leader meant a nuclear war, saying he was referring to a popular uprising against New Delhi's rule in Indian Kashmir.

India has a 'no first strike' policy but Pakistan has not ruled out using nuclear weapons first if its territorial integrity is threatened. The rivals have fought three wars since independence in 1947, two over Kashmir. *Reuters*

Lula employs military to fix Brazil's roads

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil—New leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva decided on Wednesday to employ the Army to help repair Brazil's roads as he deepened cuts on infrastructure to help feed the poor.

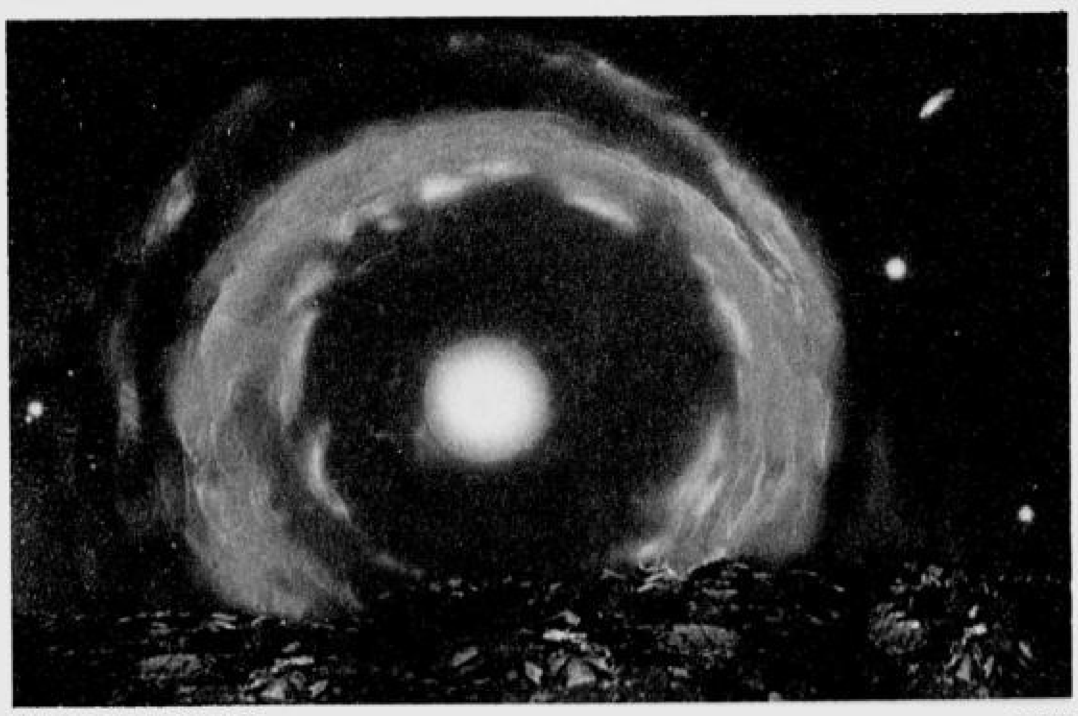
Former union leader Lula, who was in the past imprisoned by military rulers, backed the move three days after also suspending government spending on new road projects to save an estimated 5 billion reais ($1.5 billion).

"The president stressed that the country needs all sections of society, and the help of the armed forces in particular, in the tasks of government," presidential spokesperson Andre Singer said.

It was Lula's second major cost-saving measure involving the military since he became leader Jan. 1 of Latin America's largest country. He has also suspended the $700 million purchase of 12 new fighter jets.

"I don't think it's a symbolic act . . . everyone knows that the armed forces possess state of the art expertise in transport." Singer told a news conference. He said using the Army, which was only brought fully under civilian control in 1999, could help control overspending and other irregularities in road projects. The plan called for reequipping 11 battalions of the engineering corps for repair and supervisory work, he added.

The highly popular Lula suspended on Sunday new road works to free up spending for social projects such as his "zero hunger" program for Brazil's 54 million poor that aims to raise food production and pay for food handouts. *Reuters*



EXPLODING STAR

REUTERS

Rho Cas, a rare star type called a hypergiant shown in this artist's conception, recently underwent a huge eruption, sending out enough material to make 10,000 new planet Earths.

Vietnamese call girl rings busted

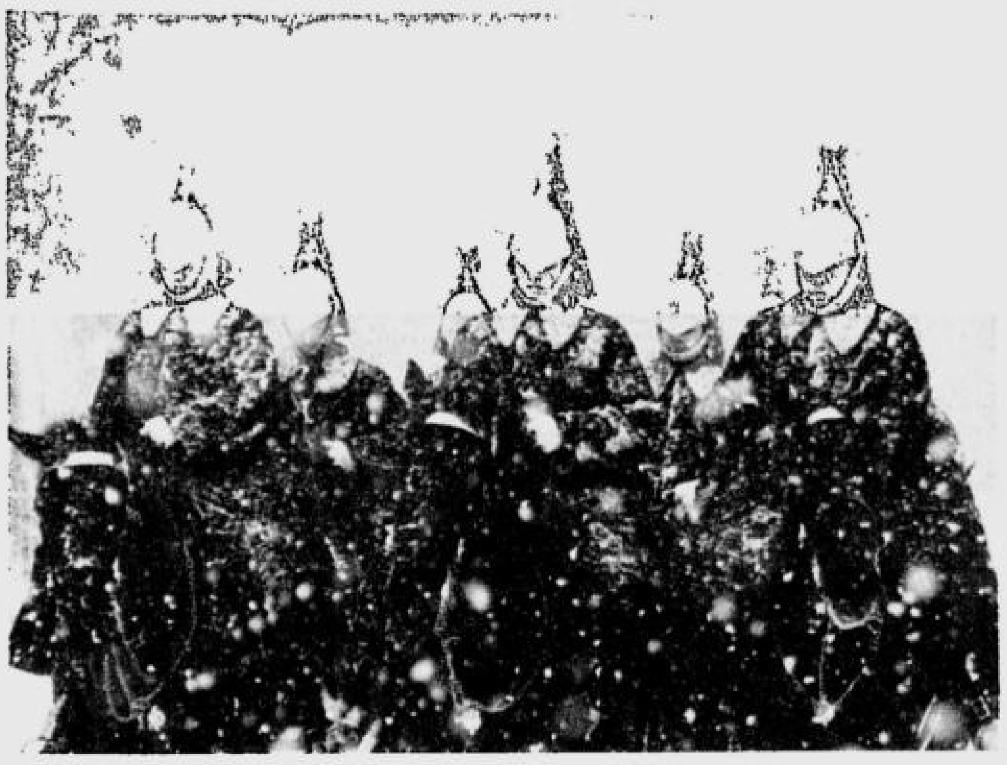
HANOI—Police in Vietnam said Thursday they have broken up three high-class prostitution rings catering to well-heeled locals and expatriate workers in Ho Chi Minh City.

At least 22 call girls have been arrested so far in a series of sweeps which began on Monday across the bustling southern business capital.

Several of those detained were caught en flagrante at hotels with their clients, a city police spokesperson said.

Besides wealthy Vietnamese, the ring mainly catered to Japanese, South Korean and Taiwanese expats, but no foreigners were arrested in the raids, he added.

Around 40 of the hundreds of "highly attractive prostitutes" involved in the three rings were actresses, singers and dancers, according to the city's police-run newspaper. *AFP*



AFP

NEITHER SLEET NOR SNOW
Britain's Household Cavalry passes the Guards Memorial in snow in central London, Jan. 8.

Nokor may offer way out of crisis, diplomats say

SEOUL/TOKYO—North Korea will agree to abandon its nuclear arms program if the United States reaffirms the contents of a 2000 joint communique which declared they had "no hostile intention" toward each other, diplomatic sources with close ties to Pyongyang said on Thursday.

The possible way out of a stand-off over North Korea's nuclear arms program comes a day after Washington offered dialogue with the reclusive communist state, but refused to offer incentives for scrapping its atomic ambitions.

In public, at least, the North maintained its fierce anti-American rhetoric and has yet to respond to Washington's offer, but a diplomatic source with close ties to Pyongyang suggested they were softening their stance.

"Reaffirming the joint communique issued in October 2000 would suffice," the source told Reuters in Tokyo.

"The North would agree to abandon its nuclear program if the United States agrees to go back to the joint communique and re-affirm it."

In the 2000 statement, North Korea and the United States vowed to end decades of hostility and work for better ties.

Shortly after its signing, then-US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright visited Pyongyang to meet North Korean leader Kim Jong-il.

Her trip was intended to lay the ground work for a visit to North Korea by then-President Bill Clinton, but his term ended before the trip materialized.

Tensions on the divided peninsula have risen since US officials said in October that North Korea had admitted pursuing a nuclear arms program in violation of a 1994 pact, and escalated further after Pyongyang threatened to reactivate a nuclear plant capable of producing weapons-grade plutonium.

North Korea kept the world waiting on Thursday for a direct response to the US offer of talks, repeating stock demands and denunciations of Washington which is insisting Pyongyang take the next step.

A day after the United States changed tack and offered a dialogue with the East Asian communist state, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said on Wednesday that "the ball is in North Korea's court." *Reuters*

North Korea's forces large but outdated

WASHINGTON—North Korea's massive military is probably backed up by one or two nuclear weapons and would present a greater challenge to American forces than Iraq's, US defense officials say.

With 1.2 million troops, North Korea is considered the world's most militarized nation: It has more soldiers, per capita, than any other. Its military is the fourth or fifth largest in the world, and more than 30 percent of its gross domestic product is spent on its military, according to CIA estimates.

But for all its size, North Korea's conventional military can't match US technology, despite an effort to modernize, officials said. It is short on fuel and sometimes food, even though it receives both before the civilian populace does.

However, US military planners still fear North Korea's ability to wreak havoc in a fast-moving conflict on the peninsula. Some of its forces are stationed just 50 km) from South Korea's capital of Seoul, and could quickly bombard civilian areas using artillery.

North Korea also has an arsenal of long-range ballistic missiles, many of which can reach Japan, where more US forces are stationed. The country is believed to have made one or two nuclear weapons with plutonium in the early 1990s.

The US discovery of North Korea's attempts to covertly restart its nuclear weapons program, with easier-to-conceal efforts using enriched uranium, touched off the current crisis. Since diplomats confronted North Korea with information on its uranium program, Pyongyang has taken the initial steps to restart its plutonium program at Yongbyon.

But North Korea's conventional forces, many of them stationed along the northern side of the demilitarized zone between the two Koreas, have not made any particularly aggressive moves since the crisis began, beyond moving a few light machine guns into the area several times in December, defense officials said.

More than 65 percent of North Korea's ground forces are kept within 100 km of the zone; the area north of the DMZ is one of the most heavily militarized stretches of land in the world, according to the Defense Intelligence Agency. This includes an increasing number of long-range artillery and rocket systems.

Fear of bombardment on its civilian areas probably drives South Korea's push for a diplomatic, rather than military, solution to the crisis, experts said.

"The South Koreans are very, very worried about that," said James Lilley, a former U.S. ambassador to South Korea and China. "They don't want any part of an American attack on Yongbyon." *AP*

LIBYA CONSUL
Nineteen-year-old "Miss Net USA" Tecca Zendik, an American citizen who was awarded Libyan citizenship by Libyan leader Moamer Kadhafi, shows off her new passport in Tripoli Jan. 8. The Libyan authorities appointed her as Libya's honorary consul to Washington, just days after US President Bush extended crippling economic sanctions against Tripoli. AFP

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NPA says more youths becoming rebs

SOMEWHERE IN THE CORDILLERA—About 400 youths, with ages ranging from 18 to 21, joined the revolutionary movement last year, a former Kabataang Makabayan official said.

Ka Dino Kalayaan, former spokesperson of the youth arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army, said the movement had formally accepted 100 more youths early last year to counteract the arrival of American troops in the country.

But in the last quarter of 2002, the number of young rebels, mostly from Metro Manila, had doubled, according to Ka Arop, commanding officer of the Leonardo Pacsi Command of the CPP-NPA based in Mt. Province.

Most of them are deployed to Mt. Province, Kalinga, Abra and some parts of the Ilocos region, he said.

He said the increase was due to the growing discontentment of the youth toward what he called anti-people policies of the Macapagal administration.

The military, however, denied that the number of communist rebels was increasing.

Maj. Elmer Quiros, chief of Civil Relations Service in Northern Luzon, cited the 2002 yearend report of the Armed Forces that noted a decrease of 17 percent in the NPA membership in Northern Luzon.

From 1,800, the membership decreased to 1,500, Quiros said, adding that the youths' decision to join the movement was merely due to "adventurism."

The NPA has stepped up its attacks on government targets recently.

The rebels claimed responsibility for an ambush that wounded an Army colonel and his three men in a village of Tupi, South Cotabato on Saturday afternoon.

In a statement, Jorge Madlos, spokesperson of the National Democratic Front for Mindanao, admitted that the NPA's Guerrilla Front 73 under Juanito Bandal Command operating in South Cotabato was behind last week's ambush.

The injured military official was Lt. Col. Eduardo Andes, battalion commander of the Army's 27th Infantry Battalion based in Kablon, Tupi.

He is now recuperating at the St. Elizabeth Hospital in General Santos City.

Injured during the ambush were Pfc. Johnny Sinaon, Sgt. Pablito Canja and Sgt. Patriarch Hitalia.

Two teams of Army soldiers led by Andes were on their way to Barangay Tubing after receiving reports that an armed group ransacked the house of an unidentified policeman living in the area. But upon reaching Barangay Palian, just less than a kilometer away from their destination, the government troopers were waylaid by 20 rebels. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Pursue slay raps vs mayor, court rules

SANTIAGO CITY—The Court of Appeals' first division reversed a lower court decision dismissing the double murder charges against Mayor Jose "Pempe" Miranda and five others, including three police officers, for the killing of two men in Ramon town in 1996.

In an 18-page order dated Jan. 2, the appellate court directed Judge Anastacio Anghad of the regional trial court to issue the arrest warrants against Miranda and his co-accused SP03 Alberto Dalmacio, PO3 Romeo Ocon, PO2 Rodel Maderal, Boyet de la Cruz and an Amado Doe.

The CA declared Anghad's dismissal of the double murder charges against Miranda and five others as "null and void for having been issued with grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction in issuing the assailed orders."

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach Miranda and Anghad for reactions.

The order was an offshoot of the petition filed by Virgilio Tuliao, father of slay victim Elezer Tuliao. The charred bodies of the young Tuliao and Vicente Bauzon were found on March 8, 1996 at Barangay Purok-ni-Bulan in Ramon.

The CA also directed the reinstatement in the lower court's docket of active criminal cases the two double murder cases.

"An accused must first be placed into the custody of the law before the court may validly act on his petition for judicial relief," the court noted.

It added: "In this case, it is not disputed that when private respondents Miranda, Dalmacio and Ocon filed an urgent motion to complete preliminary investigation, to reinvestigate, to recall and/or quash warrants of arrest, they were not yet arrested or otherwise temporarily deprived of liberty."

Associate Justice Sergio Pestano wrote the decision while acting Presiding Justice Cancio Garcia and Associate Justice Eloy Bello concurred. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Natural park bans chainsaws

OROQUIETA CITY—Power chain saws are officially banned inside the Mt. Malindang Natural Park.

The ban has become Misamis Occidental province's policy in accordance with an ordinance.

Ordinance No. 16-02, passed by the provincial board on Oct. 30, 2002, prohibits the "possession or use of power saws/chainsaws in barangays" within the natural park.

The prohibition covers ownership, possession, and use of power saws by persons living, working or visiting the villages inside the park. The ordinance bans chainsaws in 61 villages and three cities of the province.

Most of the villages are in hinterland Don Victoriano town inhabited by the Subanen tribe.

Beneficiaries of the government's Community-Based Forest Management Program, however, are "allowed to use contracted chainsaws in cutting . . . planted trees . . ."

The cutting will also be subject to the permission of the Protected Area Management Board.

Those found violating the law could face imprisonment and fine or both. *Ryan D. Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

240 ex-Cordillera rebels tapped for repair of rice terraces

CAMP MELCHOR DELA CRUZ, Isabela—At least 240 former Cordillera rebels who were accepted as soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines will be tapped to help restore the world-renowned Ifugao rice terraces, an Army official here said.

Brig. Gen. Rodolfo Alvarado, commander of the Army's 5th Infantry Division based here, said the new soldiers, former rebels of the Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA), would comprise the three companies of soldiers who would be deployed to Ifugao to do restoration work.

The idea was conceived after President Macapagal-Arroyo personally saw a two-hectare replica of the rice terraces inside the Army camp here, carved out by hand by the "Cordillera privates" from the rolling slopes that used to be grassland overlooking the camp's training grounds.

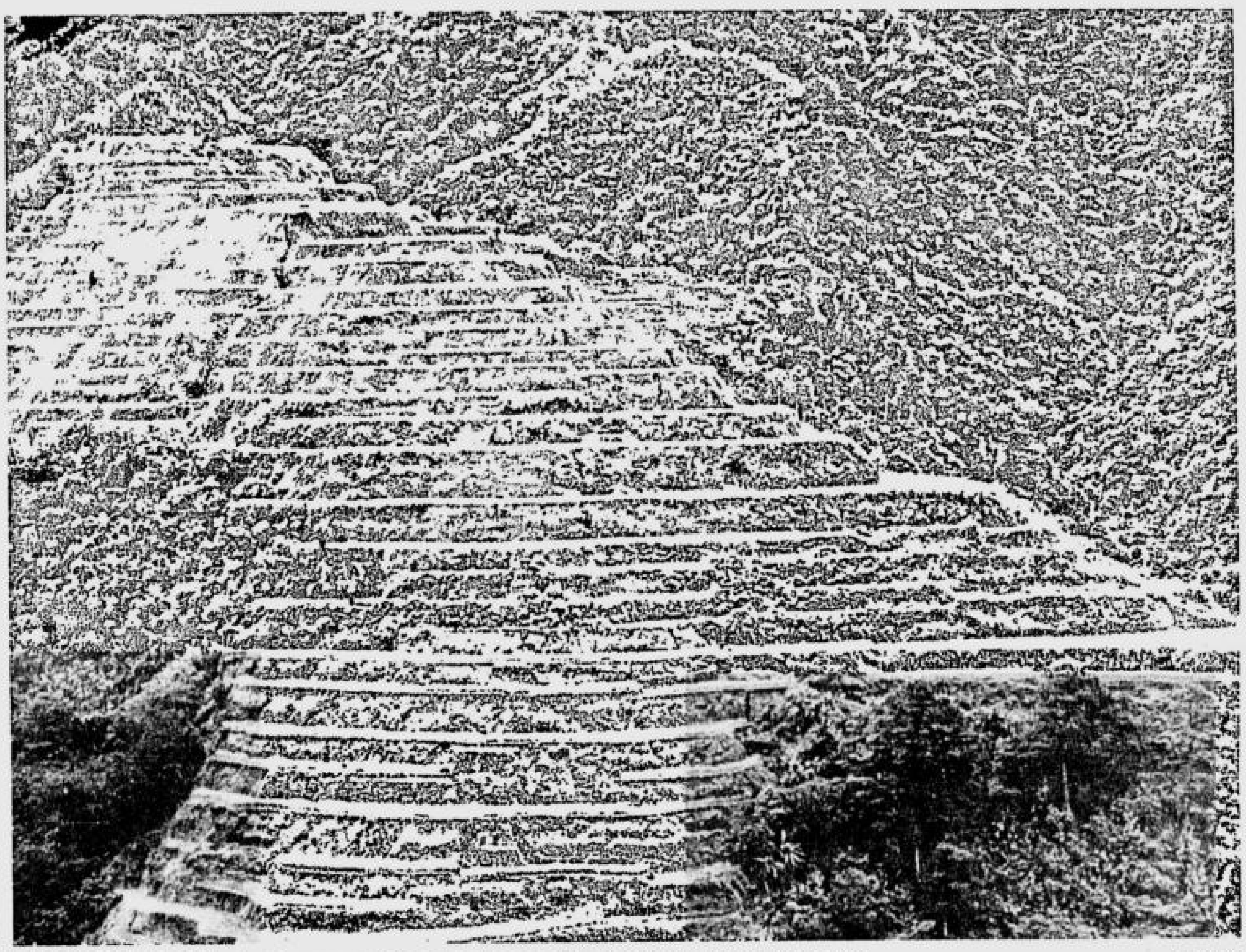
"President Macapagal-Arroyo considered the camp's terraces to be a wonderful idea to also try out the skills of our new soldiers in Banaue," Alvarado said.

The newly graduated troops form part of the almost 2,000 beneficiaries of the government's integration program for former CPLA rebels.

Private Agustin Macad, 52, the oldest among the CPLA integrees, can hardly wait for his newest assignment.

"It would be a like a nice homecoming for many of us, especially for those who are from Ifugao," said Macad, a native of Tinglayan, Kalinga.

Alvarado said officials of the Army, the provincial government of Ifugao and the Department of Tourism are now drawing up plans for the deployment of the troops.



THE GRANDEUR of the rice terraces awaits restoration as neglect continues to erode its slopes.

FILE PHOTO

"I have instructed my officers to personally coordinate with Ifugao Gov. (Teodoro) Baguilat Jr. so we can start the project at the soonest possible time," Alvarado said.

Part of the plan is the conduct of seminars for the soldiers on their deployment and employment, Alvarado added, as well as the holding of lectures and film showing activities on the importance of the preservation of the rice terraces.

"In a way, we hope our soldiers could help imbibe in the youth, the residents and the visitors the values of hard work, unity and the preservation of our culture," he said.

The troops' deployment, Alvarado said, would not only provide skilled labor to the restoration work on the terraces, but also additional security in the area especially for visiting tourists.

"We believe this move would further boost tourism in the area, as their visibility alone could give confidence for tourists and serve as a deterrent for criminals," he said. *Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

CAPIZ CLASH

Rebels say Army covering up mistaken encounter

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Communist rebels have accused top Army officials on Panay Island of covering up an alleged encounter between government troops where a soldier was killed and another was injured.

In a two-page statement in Hiligaynon sent to reporters here, the Jose Percival Estocada Command of the New People's Army claimed that the gunfight in Sitio Agmamba, Barangay Carmen in Dumalag town, Capiz on Nov. 28 was a clash between soldiers belonging to the Army's 12th Infantry Battalion.

"More than a month after the firefight . . . Task Force Panay (TFP) has covered up the truth that Pfc. Reynaldo Cruz was shot and killed while S/Sgt. Larry Codo was injured by their own comrades in the Alpha Company . . . ," said Jurie Guerrero, the NPA unit's spokesperson. The TFP is in charge of internal security operations on Panay Island.

Cruz died of multiple bullet wounds during the 30-minute gunfight. Codo was taken to the Western Visayas Medical Center in this city for treatment of a bullet wound below his right knee.

Col. Jeffrey Sodusta, TFP commanding officer, dismissed the allegation as "propaganda."

He said the allegation is part of the rebel's campaign to push for the removal of the soldiers in Central Panay.

"It only shows that they are in the area and want us out because we are hampering their extortion activities," Sodusta told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

He reiterated his earlier statement that soldiers of the Alpha Company were on foot patrol when they chanced upon a temporary camp of around 15-20 rebels at about 2 a.m. in the hinterland barangay.

Sodusta said the soldiers conducted the operation after receiving reports that suspected rebels led by Romulo "Ka Regan" Gangoso, believed to be the head of the Eastern Front Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines in Panay, were in the area.

But Guerrero said "no member" of his command, which operates in Central Panay, and of the Nonito Aguirre Command, which operates in Eastern Panay, fought with the soldiers. The rebels usually claim responsibility for their offensive operations through press statements.

"Our guerilla unit was undertaking revolutionary work among the masses during that time (day of the clash)," said Guerrero. "Instead of giving justice (to the casualties), Cruz's death was used to show their 'accomplishment' in claiming that they ran after and clashed with the NPA."

Sodusta said Codo, who led the foot patrol, could testify that they clashed with the rebels.

Cebu family scion found dead with bullet wound in head

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—One of the members of the rich Aznar clan here died yesterday morning of a bullet wound in the head, which left authorities baffled.

Police, however, could not yet establish if Christopher "Jake" Aznar, 24, killed himself or was shot by someone.

Aznar was with her second live-in partner named Wensie Badajos when the shooting happened at about 6 a.m. inside their room on Asuncion Street, Barangay Sambag in this city.

Maria Guico, Aznar's first live-in partner, who is also living inside the Aznar compound, said she believed the shooting could have been an accident.

"Maybe he was just playing with his gun and it accidentally went off. He did not kill himself. Jake would never do that. I know him very well," Guico said.

Aznar was first brought to the family-owned Sacred Heart Hospital but was later transferred to the Cebu Doctors Hospital where he died at about 9 a.m.

Initial police investigation showed that Aznar was shot in the upper lip. The bullet went out slightly above his forehead.

SPO2 Alex Dacua, police homicide investigator, said they found the .9-mm pistol and an empty shell inside the room occupied by Aznar and Wensie.

He said Wensie was inside the room at that the time Aznar was shot but she claimed that she did not see the actual shooting because she was busy attending to their six-month-old baby.

She told the police that she was only jolted by the burst of gunfire. She, however, admitted that she saw Aznar holding his gun when he arrived at the house at about 5:30 a.m. She added that there was no other person inside the room at that time.

Dacua said initial investigation showed that Aznar and Wensie had an argument prior to the shooting.

Still, he said they would ask the victim's family to allow the police to conduct a paraffin test on Aznar and Wensie.

Aznar, Wensie and their baby occupied the house located at the back of his mother's house where Guico and her five-year-old son, fathered by Aznar, were staying.

Guico said she had no problem with Wensie about the arrangement. She said she and Aznar had long parted ways.

Supt. Joshua Gillamac, an uncle, admitted that Aznar came to see him on Wednesday to talk about his problem. The police officer, however, refused to say what the problem was except that Aznar felt bad when his mother, Consuelo, berated him.

The victim belongs to the rich Aznar family that owns a hospital, a school, among others. The family is also in the real estate business.

Aznar is facing several criminal charges before the city prosecutor's office and the different courts in Cebu. These include kidnapping and frustrated murder, illegal possession of firearms, possession of illegal drugs, and car theft.

Aznar is the cousin of Jozman Aznar who was convicted, along with several . . . scions of wealthy families, of the abduction, rape and killing of sisters Jacqueline and Marijoy Chiong in 1997.

GENUINE GESTURE

PHOTO FROM DR. REYES

The giver appears more gratified than the recipient as Dr. Ruel Reyes of ATR World's Best Wines and Spirits, distributor of Torres brandy in the Philippines, hands out goodies to the children of farm workers in Pangao, Lipa City during the holidays. Assisting Dr. Reyes is Mar Maralit (partly hidden) and Recah Trinidad, INQUIRER columnist, while Gene Cortez, ATR sales manager, looks on. Sen. Robert Jaworski, businessman Lucio Yan and civic leader Nandy Charvet helped in the annual project.

Army to file protest vs MILF for bombings

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The Southern Command said it would file formal complaints against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) for alleged violations of the ceasefire agreement.

Southcom chief Lt. General Narciso Abaya said the complaints will be filed on Jan. 8 in time for the scheduled resumption of talks between government and MILF peace panels in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Abaya told the INQUIRER that they were building "a stronger and more comprehensive protest report to be submitted to the government peace panel to be filed against the MILF who always violates the ceasefire agreement."

But MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu welcomed the military's move even as he said "it's entirely unfair for us because they have already accused us and announced to the media with the absence of a ceasefire committee investigation report."

Abaya said based on their initial investigation, the MILF was involved in last month's ambush in Baliguian, Zamboanga del Norte and in the bombings in Datu Piang, Maguindanao and in Tacurong City. The three attacks left at least 20 people dead and 40 others wounded.

"The reality here is that we have strong (pieces of) evidence against them even if they continuously deny all the accusations," Abaya said.

Kabalu said the military wanted to scuttle the peace talks.

"They just want to discredit us in the upcoming peace talks. All their claimed documents or (pieces of) evidence are baseless," Kabalu said. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Capiz PNP head draws ire of cops in drugs

By Gerry T. Pagharion
PDI Visayas Bureau

ROXAS CITY—Supt. Efren Quintos, Capiz police director, has been a subject of a "poison letter" demanding his relief.

The letter came out after Quintos linked six Capiz policemen to the proliferation of illegal drugs in the province last month. Quintos, however, did not mention the names of the six policemen.

The letter, addressed to the Office of the President and without a date, questioned Quintos' implementation of "his policies to be followed by the (policemen) in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities."

Quintos was caught unaware of the letter and only got hold a copy of it on Wednesday. But the office of Gov. Vicente Bermejo received a copy Dec. 18, 2002.

Copies of the letter were also furnished the chiefs of Philippine National Police, Department of Interior and Local Governments, National Police Commission and Department of Trade and Industry and Roxas City Mayor Antonio del Rosario.

The unsigned letter was made to appear as having come from police commission and non-commission officers in Capiz. But not one name of the about 600 policemen in the province appeared as signatory to the letter.

The letter accused Quintos of, among others, not observing ethical standards in the police service "because internal matters within the organization/office involving operation are right away disseminated to the media without making any investigation."

"This puts the Philippine National Police personnel under public ridicule in particular and the PNP organization/office in general," the letter said.

The unidentified petitioners also protested Quintos' branding of PNP personnel as protectors of drug lords and of committing other illegal activities in news media.

They also claimed that they were subjected by Quintos to humiliation even for minor lapses.

Quintos was unfazed as he admitted that he was strict "but that's the only way I can impose discipline in the organization."

"I scold them," he said, "but I never humiliated them."

He said the letter could have been instigated by "not more than 10 policemen whom I have stepped on" in the performance of his job.

Solon expresses fear on Diwalwal

REP. Manuel Zamora (1st D, Compostela Valley) recently expressed fears that violence would erupt anew in the gold mining area of Diwalwal following the removal of Heherson Alvarez as environment secretary.

In a statement, Zamora said Alvarez was strongly supportive of the government takeover of Diwalwal following tension and lawlessness between small scale miners and gold panners and big mining firms like the Southeast Mindanao Gold Mining Co.

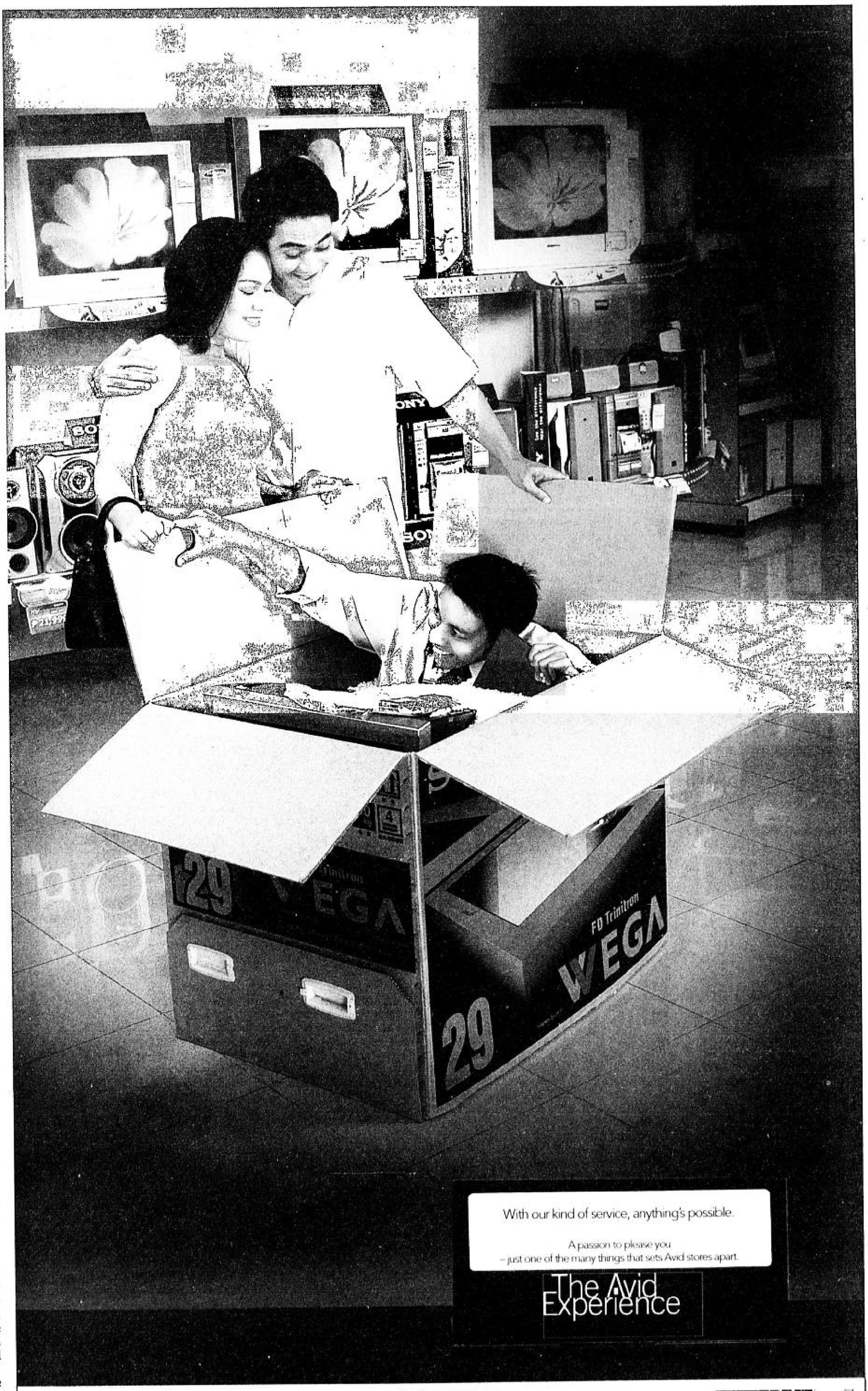
In August last year, Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte was ordered by President Macapagal to restore order in the gold rush site.

Through department administrative order No. 2002-18, Alvarez ordered that the government take over the area to "protect and promote the health of the people and advance the right to a balanced ecology."

In a speech delivered at the House of Representatives, Zamora said he hoped that the progress that was achieved because of what he said was Alvarez's decisive action on the matter will continue even under a new environment secretary.

But he also said that the current situation is now seen to be put in jeopardy by several quarters on Mt. Diwalwal due to Alvarez's recent ouster. He further cited the "very general" statement issued by new economic director Romulo Neri that there is a plan to fully activate the mining sector, which could mean another free-for-all and Mt. Diwalwal reverting to its previous situation.

"I had opposed Alvarez's confirmation at the Commission on Appointments, and even resigned from Lakas of which he was secretary general, which he incidentally rejected. But he has made a believer out of me since his solution seems to be working well, and I can only hope that it will continue to hold," Zamora said.



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Even GMA critics invited to Palace fete for diplomats

From page A1

And this time, champagne was served to the guests as soon as they entered the Ceremonial Hall.

Other notables who attended the exclusive cocktails included-Senate President Franklin Drilon, despite rumors that the President was supporting opposition leader Sen. Edgardo Angara's bid to regain the post.

Former Presidents Fidel Ramos and Corazon Aquino, who did not attend the vin d'honneur held on Independence Day last year, also showed up, but Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. snubbed the affair, as he did last Independence Day.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., House Speaker Jose De Venecia and Deputy Speaker for the Visayas Raul Gonzalez led the long list of the President's allies who showed up.

Batangas Rep. Frank Perez, son of resigned Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, apparently had no qualms about showing up.

ALL together now for a souvenir photo at the Palace of the guests at the Vin D' Honneur of 2003, the President's traditional toast to the diplomatic corps.

VAL HANDUMON

Unlike his father who bussed the President's cheeks the last time he was in Malacañang, the younger Perez merely smiled and shook hands with the Chief Executive.

An awkward moment came when Franco included Guingona among those he acknowledged at the start of his remarks.

Malacañang hosts a vin d'honneur for the diplomatic corps twice a year: at the start of the year and on Independence Day.

But yesterday's affair turned out to be more a political rather than a diplomatic show.

Observers said politicians from all parties wanted to be seen with the President, who had drawn wide praise for her decision not to run in 2004.

While Ms Macapagal was delivering her speech, Saranggani Rep. Erwin Chiongbian fainted, causing a minor commotion. He had been standing in the middle of the room.

He was immediately assisted by members of the Presidential Security Group, who led him to a chair at the back of the huge room.

Though his wife administered some medication, the very pale-looking Chiongbian was shortly taken to an ambulance.

The President appeared not to have noticed the incident and did not pause in her speech.

3 generals urged Viña to testify; he said no

From page A1

But Viña, former chief of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) in the Visayas, turned down the offer, saying he would only do so if pushed against the wall, Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya of the Civil Security Group yesterday said.

Viña, tagged as leader of the PAOCTF team which allegedly snatched, executed and burned Dacer and his driver Corbito, was shot dead inside a councilor's home in Tanza, Cavite, on Tuesday night.

The alleged gunman, Medar Cruz, a *balikbayan* from the United States, was brought for inquest yesterday morning before the Imus prosecutor's office on charges of murder and illegal possession of firearms, despite his claims of innocence.

Berroya, then chief of the Intelligence Group, invited Viña to lunch at the Mandarin Hotel in Makati City in the "middle of 2001" to discuss the Dacer-Corbito double murder case.

Present during the meeting were Mendoza, then chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP), and Deputy Director General Rex Piad, then the chief of the PNP Directorial Staff.

"Over lunch, I asked him if he wanted to testify for the government, but he replied that he would only do so if 'pushed against the wall,'" Berroya said. No other meeting followed after that.

Berroya said he initiated the talks with Viña because he was aware that the former PAOCTF official "played a major role in the case, and hence, his testimony in the case was vital." *(See related story on this page.)*

Berroya said he had no other reason for disclosing the meeting with Viña than to shed light on the ongoing investigation of Viña's killing.

Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., current PNP chief, had theorized that Viña's slay was connected to the Dacer-Corbito case, pointing out that this happened shortly after another suspect, PO2 Tomas Sarmiento, was presented to the media.

Until yesterday, Cruz was denying that he killed Viña, who, according to the suspect's father Eustacio, had met with Cruz in the United States.

Summer of 2000

Police records showed that Viña could have first met his assailant at the latter's home in Virginia, USA, in the summer of 2000, not the summer of 2001 as police officials had earlier claimed.

Senior Supt. Roberto Rosales, director for Cavite, said on Wednesday that Viña, together with two unidentified police officers, paid a visit to Eustacio Cruz at his home in Virginia, and was introduced to the young Cruz in the "summer of 2001." Rosales said Viña was attending a seminar in the area.

Records, however, showed that Viña attended a Major Case Management Course in Quantico, Virginia, from Aug. 21 to Sept. 1, 2000. He was still assigned to the PAOCTF at the time.

Other police officers, who took part in the training, were then Senior Superintendents Michael Ray Aquino of the PAOCTF, Jaime Caringal of Region 4 and Raul Bacalzo of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

Rosales said it was the elder Cruz who recalled that the visit happened in the "summer of 2001." Police have yet to establish the identities of Viña's two companions during the visit.

In May 2002, the Court of Appeals issued an order, including Viña, Aquino and Senior Supt. Cesar Mancao in the amended information sheet for double murder filed by the justice department. At least 22 persons were charged in the same case.

Rosales said the police had a strong case against Cruz, noting that the evidence included his positive identification as gunman by at least nine "credible" witnesses.

The eyewitnesses included Gen. Trias Mayor Dencito Campaña, State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco, Cruz's father Eustacio, and Councilor Flaviano Satsatin, owner of the house where the shooting took place.

"All the witnesses pointed to him as the gunman," Rosales said in a phone interview.

The witnesses' positive identification of Cruz as the gunman was further boosted by results of the paraffin tests, which showed that Cruz's right hand was positive for gunpowder burns.

"We have a very strong case," said Supt. Rhodel Samonia, chief of the Cavite police's intelligence and investigation division, citing the same pieces of evidence investigators had gathered against the suspect.

Suspect's godfather

Retired policeman Benito Ambata and dismissed police officer Reynato Arenas, the suspect's godfather, were among the witnesses who could pin Cruz down.

Ambata testified that Cruz shot and killed Viña in front of other visitors inside the house of Satsatin, according to Samonia.

Samonia said Arenas, formerly assigned to the Gen. Trias police headquarters, refused to give his testimony despite his presence at the scene when the crime was committed.

But Rosales said Arenas was in hiding.

Rosales said Arenas, also a *balikbayan*, arrived from the United States on Dec. 30, three days after Cruz's arrival, to attend to a murder case. *With reports from Floreño G. Solmirano and Fausto Tatad Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

NBI, DOJ convinced Viña involved in murders

By Michael Lim Ubac

WOULD the death of Senior Supt. Teofilo Viña bring to a close speculations that he was the point man in the abduction and double murder of Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Manuel Corbito in 2000?

The Department of Justice and its investigation arm, the National Bureau of Investigation, are both convinced that Viña indeed supervised the whole operation-from the surveillance to kidnapping and to the final execution of the two victims.

Based on NBI and DOJ files, the former head of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (Paoctf) Visayas was the highest ranking police official to be initially implicated in the double murder.

Viña had maintained innocence in the kidnap-slay, but suspects-turned-state witness Alex Diloy and Jimmy Lopez claimed that it was Viña who called up four Paoctf agents right after the abduction on Nov. 24, 2000.

Also, Viña's signature allegedly appeared on a mission order recovered from Diloy during his arrest in March 2001.

During the raid, NBI agents seized a .45-caliber pistol from Lopez. When asked about the gun, Lopez presented a mission order purportedly signed by Viña.

Aside from the witnesses' claims and the recovered mission order, NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco earlier said that days after the abduction of Dacer, Viña had talked to reporters in Cebu that he was in Cebu before, during and after the abduction.

PAL manifest

But a Philippine Airlines manifest showed he left for Manila on the afternoon of Nov. 23, and went back to Cebu on the evening of Nov. 24. Dacer and Corbito were abducted at about 11:30 p.m. on the same day on the South Superhighway in Manila. The two were later brought to Indang, Cavite, where they were killed and burned.

On April 6, 2001, Wycoco said that Viña could be charged after he snubbed the NBI's order for him to appear before the NBI to explain his role in the Dacer case.

His deliberate refusal to submit himself for questioning by NBI agents had prompted Wycoco to order his men to prepare criminal charges against the police superintendent.

Wycoco said Viña, as a senior police officer, should formally answer the allegations since, he said, the latter was being charged with a serious crime.

"Aside from clearing his name, the least he can do is give dignity to the profession by explaining why members of the PAOCTF were at the scene of the crime," Wycoco said.

But despite earlier pronouncements, the DOJ failed to include Viña in the charge sheet indicting 22 men, including 11 police officers, for kidnapping and double murder.

The rest of the policemen are former members of the PAOCTF Luzon and Visayas. Of the 22 charged, 11 are now in government custody—eight policemen surrendered to the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group while three civilians were arrested by the NBI.

Dumlao, the Lopez brothers and Diloy were among the 22 men originally charged before the Manila RTC. State investigators and prosecutors were able to persuade Dumlao, along with the Lopez brothers and Diloy, to turn state witness.

Dumlao had allegedly ordered a team of the PAOCTF to execute Dacer and Corbito in Indang, Cavite, hours after they were abducted.

The Court of Appeals had allowed the three to turn state witness. But the CA rejected a motion seeking that the charges against Senior Supt. Glenn G. Dumlao be dropped.

The appellate court, citing a Supreme Court ruling on the Witness Protection Program, said that Dumlao, being a police officer, could not be admitted to the program.

Explaining the decision not to indict Viña, then NBI National Capital Region chief Samuel Ong said: "We don't have a good case against him."

He said all the pieces of evidence gathered against Viña were circumstantial ones. "These are mere hearsay," he added. "And we don't want to doctor any evidence just to implicate somebody. All our evidence are aboveboard."

Amended charge sheet

However, the DOJ changed its mind and moved to amend the charge sheet by including Senior Superintendents Michael Ray Aquino, Cesar Mancao II and Viña.

In May 2001, the government scored a victory in the CA which ordered the indictment of Mancao, Aquino and Viña for double murder.

The appellate court's 8th Division removed all legal obstacles for the inclusion of the names of the three top officials of the defunct PAOCTF in the amended information for double murder.

Both Aquino and Mancao are believed to be hiding in the United States.

Aquino was the operations chief, Mancao the head of task force Luzon, while Viña was the chief of the task force Visayas when the crime was committed

The name of Sen. Panfilo Lacson, then chief of the Philippine National Police, cropped up during the investigation because of his close association with Viña, Aquino and Mancao.

Lacson was the concurrent head of the PAOCTF when the double murder was committed, but no evidence has come up linking him to the crime.

Lacson and Viña, in separate interviews, had maintained their innocence, accusing the government of dragging their names into the case to discredit those associated with the previous Estrada administration.

Besides Viña, Aquino and Mancao, the CA also allowed substituting SPO3 Allan Cadenilla Villanueva for accused Police Inspector Danilo Villanueva. Mancao and Aquino had sought a reconsideration of the ruling, but the CA has yet to act on it.

Judge Edelwina Pastoral, now handling the double murder case, can't proceed with the trial pending the final decision of the CA.

Pastoral is also barred from issuing any warrant of arrest on Aquino and Mancao.

The CA issued the ruling based on a government petition to review the Oct. 1 and Oct. 24, 2001 orders of Manila Judge Rodolfo A. Ponferrada.

Ponferrada had barred the justice department from submitting the amended information, which had charged the three police superintendents for orchestrating the abduction and killing of Dacer and Corbito.

This prompted Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo to file a petition for certiorari with the Supreme Court on Jan. 4, claiming that Ponferrada had committed "grave abuse of discretion" in denying the amended information.

The high court, however, referred the case to the appellate court.

The CA said it found the government's petition "impressed with sufficient merits and consequently, must be given due course and granted."

The CA explained that while the court had acquired jurisdiction over the case, determining who should be criminally charged in court was essentially an executive function, not a judicial one.

It said that Ponferrada "acted with grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or in excess of jurisdiction in issuing the questioned orders."

Senate …

From page A1

Demokratikong Pilipino.

Angara, who has lately pledged "collaboration and support" to President Macapagal-Arroyo and her legislative agenda, is reportedly poised to seize the Senate leadership from Drilon when Congress resumes its regular session on Monday.

But Arroyo said: "Where will they get the numbers? They're only 10 now. Where will they get the five more of the 15 they say they already have? Impossible!"

Angara needs 13 votes to bag the Senate presidency.

Arroyo also took the President to task for maintaining a neutral stance vis a vis the controversy over the House of Representatives' clamor for the amendment of the 1987 Constitution and a shift to the parliamentary form of government.

He said her silence had provoked more of the politicking that she supposedly intended to do away with when she announced last Dec. 30 that she would not seek the presidency in the 2004 elections.

He stressed that on a "vital issue" such as Charter change, "a leader cannot be neutral."

In staying neutral, he said, "the President is in effect encouraging [Charter change] because she will be [its] direct beneficiary without running."

The supposed brewing coup in the Senate is said to be in preparation for demolishing opposition to calls for Charter change. While the House under Speaker Jose de Venecia is pushing the initiative, Drilon and certain senators have declared themselves against it.

According to reports in other newspapers, Angara has been promised the support of four senators in the majority bloc for a change in the Senate leadership. They are supposedly Majority Leader Loren Legarda and Senators Robert Jaworski, Robert Barbers and De Castro.

But when reached by the INQUIRER, Barbers laughingly said there had been "no offer, no feeler, no nothing" for him to support Angara.

"I'm staying with Drilon because I appreciate his brand of leadership," Barbers said.

The offices of Legarda, Jaworski and De Castro likewise denied that they were defecting from the majority bloc.

Commitment

Barbers was quick to add that the only kind of change in the Senate leadership that he would agree to was the "fulfillment of a commitment made by Drilon" to yield the Senate presidency to Sen. Renato Cayetano.

Under an agreement reached at the start of the 12th Congress, Drilon is to serve as Senate president for the first half of the three-year term, and Cayetano, the rest of the term.

The handover should have taken place at the end of December, but the ailing Cayetano is under medical treatment in the United States. There has been no clear word on his condition.

"I have already talked with Drilon and he said he was willing to honor the commitment the moment Cayetano comes back from the US," Barbers said.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel told GMA-7 last night that Angara's scheduled report to opposition senators on Monday regarding his recent meeting with the President would have a bearing on changes in the Senate leadership.

Angara and Ms Macapagal met Tuesday on Angara's request, the President's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said Wednesday.

But Bunye denied that Angara's supposed bid for the Senate presidency was discussed at the meeting.

'Troika for Cha-cha'

At the press conference, Arroyo noted that with De Venecia and Angara pushing for the amendment of the Constitution before 2004 and with the President remaining neutral on the issue, "you find a triumvirate, a troika, for Cha-cha."

"The statements, attitudes and omission of the President belie her announcement that she is no longer interested in reelection," the senator observed.

He said that "when the President said she is neutral on Charter change, what she is [actually] saying is she is supporting Chacha because one cannot be neutral on an issue like this."

Arroyo also said that "when the President said she would not run for election because she wants unity so that her initiatives will be supported by all, she was speaking out that everyone must be united."

But Charter change "provokes dissent, discussions," he pointed out. Thus, he added, "when [the President] said she is neutral, [she] precisely encouraged discussions on this very vital issue."

Is there a pattern to the killings?

By Philip Tubeza

IS THERE a pattern in the recent killings of police officers who once worked for opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson?

Director Reynaldo Wycoco of the National Bureau of Investigation said the NBI was trying to find out if there was a link between the killing of Senior Supt. Teofilo Viña on Tuesday night and the murder of Chief Supt. John Campos last month.

Wycoco noted that there were also attempts to kill Mary "Rosebud" Ong in October and November last year.

"We are looking if there is a possible connection. We want to find out if the killings of Campos and Viña are related," he said.

He said there were also attempts on Ong's life on Oct. 21 in her safehouse and again on Nov. 28 inside the Greenhills Theater.

Ong, Campos and Viña all once worked for Lacson, a former Philippine National Police chief, who has expressed his intention to run for president in 2004.

Viña was implicated in the November 2000 abduction-murder of PR practitioner Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito. Other members of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Task Force, which Lacson headed, have also been charged in connection with the Dacer-Corbito killings.

"I don't want to name names because we might again be accused of adding political color. We just want to find out why these (the recent killings) happened in succession," Wycoco said. *With a report from TJ Burgonio*

GMA: Reform or perish

From page A1

in the office I still keep, and thereby command a wider allegiance to the policies and projects needed to improve our country," she continued.

She said her thrusts for the remainder of her term were to strengthen the economy, create more jobs and encourage more business activity by cutting down on corruption and red tape.

She said she would also work to heal the "deep divisions" in the country since Joseph Estrada's ouster as president in January 2001, and pledged to make major progress in solving the communist insurgency and integrating Muslims in society.

She also vowed to ensure "the cleanest and most orderly elections at the end of my term."

"It will profit me nothing if I succeed. But my successor will inherit a country that is in a better position to complete its rebuilding. I sow; my successor reaps. This is the majesty of democracy," she said.

Street protests

But militant groups were not in a royalist mood.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan slammed the President's speech, saying it was all "empty talk."

"There was nothing new, nothing drastic and nothing beneficial to the Filipino people in the much-touted speech by President (Macapagal) Arroyo," said Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes Jr., as his group staged a protest rally at the Mendiola Bridge.

He said the President failed to present a firm position on such issues as corruption, the "de facto" return of US military bases and the impending US war on Iraq. He noted that Ms Macapagal also did not say how her administration planned to deal with the communist insurgency and the Moro separatist movement.

Another militant group, Anakbayan, said it did not expect any radical change in the government's agenda.

Anakbayan chair Apolinario Alvarez accused the President of "showing lack of gratitude and consideration" for the people who installed her as president.

"The people are not satisfied with her announcement that she will not run again," he said. "They are still burdened with low wages, high prices of oil, electricity, water and other basic commodities and meager social services."

Anakbayan called Ms Macapagal's socioeconomic reform agenda mere "cosmetics" and claimed that the ongoing Cabinet revamp was done merely "to put up a semblance of change and order in her administration."

Members of Bayan and its allied organizations carried placards bearing the so-called "Four People's Principles," which they said government should adopt.

Reyes said the principles were "fighting graft and corruption; providing immediate economic relief to the people; resuming formal peace talks with the National Democratic Front and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front based on prior agreements; and asserting national interest in the realms of the economy, security and foreign relations."

At the vin d'honneur, the President, whose term ends on June 30 next year, said elections should not stand in the way of genuine reform.

"I will not let an election year impede reform, stop progress or take this nation back one step," she said.

"There are things that need to be done to this country" that would "require the power of cooperation," the President said.

"By giving up (the chance to win a full term), I hope to gain the power that can make life better for those who never had it good and even for those who never had it so good."

"I want intelligent laws that conduce to peace, progress and prosperity," she added.

"I may not be running for president, but that will not diminish my effort one bit," Arroyo said. "I ask everyone to work with me to ensure that we can revolutionize our nation through reform, honest dialogue and lasting change."

Substantial progress

Ms Macapagal said her administration had also made "substantial progress" since she assumed office in January 2001.

She said her administration had stabilized the macro-economic condition, battled crime and corruption, and turned around the country's image abroad by actively supporting the global antiterrorism front.

She expressed her regrets that some of her major reform-oriented decisions, which earned her "many powerful enemies," were viewed negatively.

Since she has dropped her election plans in 2004, she called for political unity that is based not on blind submission, but on "conscious cooperation."

At the same time, she encouraged a "vigorous debate on alternative ways of change."

"In the vision that guides my administration, I see a country liberated from the grip and greed of the past. I see this happening through a revolution in the way we think and in the way we do politics and economics," she said.

"At the center of this revolution must be a commitment to reforms and to putting the people first," she added.

"We must shake loose the grip of the status quo and set our country free and on the road to prosperity," she added. *With reports from AFP, Reuters, AP; Agnes Donato, Jerome Aning*

Gloria rejects appeals to change her mind to run in 2004

PRESIDENTIAL spokesperson Ignacio Bunye told reporters the President had rejected appeals from political allies to change her mind about not running in 2004.

At a caucus of the ruling Lakas party late Wednesday, a number of provincial party leaders "voiced the misgivings of some of their own followers that they still want the President to run," Bunye said.

"No, I will not change my decision," Bunye quoted her as telling the caucus.

"There was a decision reached that the standard-bearer would be chosen during the latter part of December or early January 2004," he added.

Ms Macapagal's allies are confident that "there's still enough time (to mount a winning candidacy) if you make the choice at around that time," he said.

The next presidential election is on May 10, 2004.

Senate President Pro Tempore Juan Flavier, a party stalwart, said Ms Macapagal and her allies on Wednesday discussed "ideas on procedures on what to do for selection of standard bearer, but (there was) no closure."

He said more meetings would be held to discuss the issue, including the selection criteria.

The Scrooge ...

From page A1

among 13 senators who started their terms in July 2001. Other senators spent from P6 million to over P7 million. The itemized list was published pursuant to Commission on Audit regulations.

Senators Renato Cayetano, Juan Flavier and Sergio Osmeña III had the lowest expenditures from Jan. 1, 2001 to Dec. 31, 2001. Cayetano spent P10.52 million; Flavier, P10.74 million; and Osmeña III, P10.85 million. Other senators, who served the full year, disbursed from P11 million to more than P13 million.

Records show that Arroyo did not spend for office travel, equipment and furniture, and for consultancy fees. Until May 2002, he did not hire any office staff, his trademark practice as a congressman.

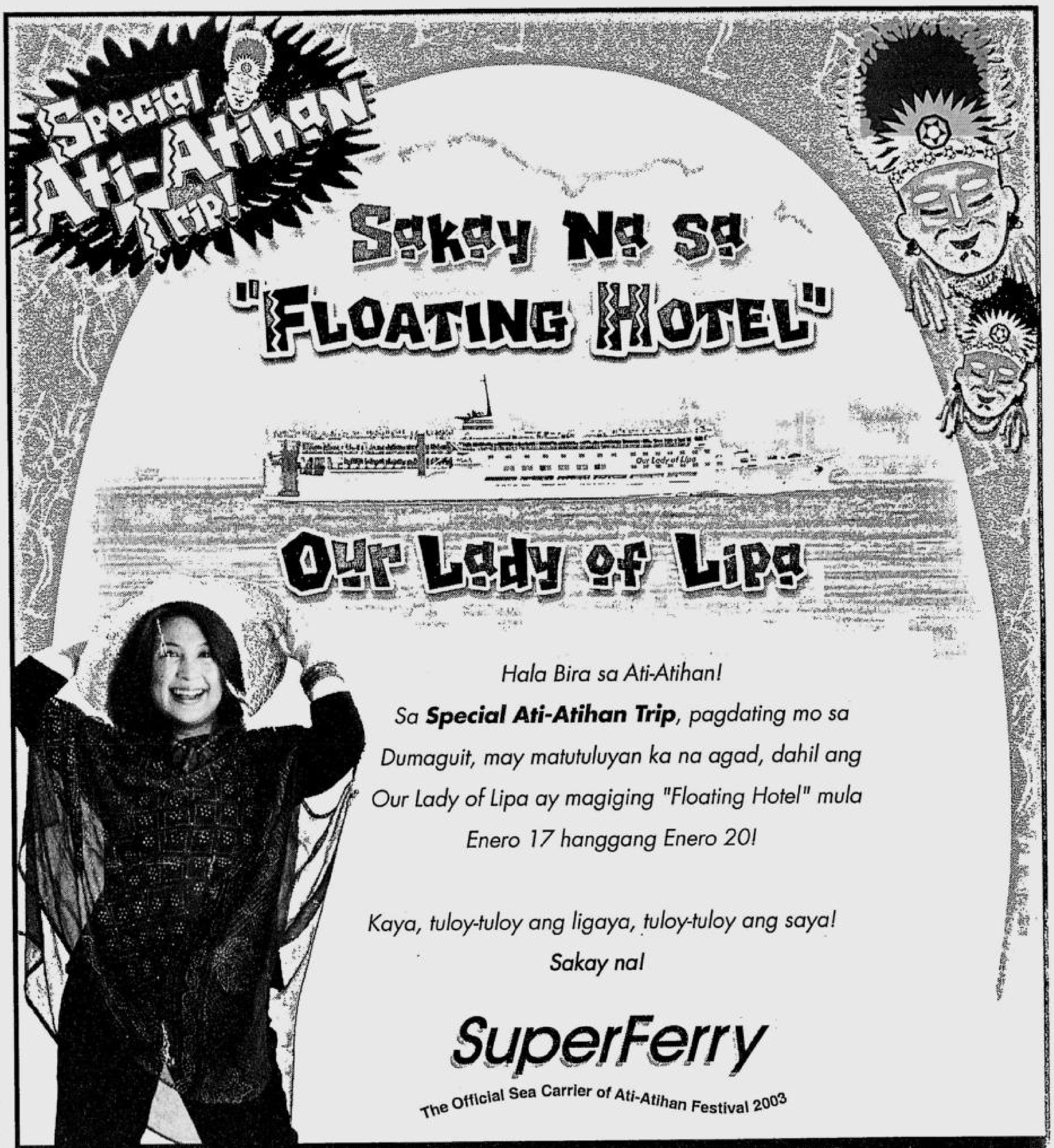
Each senator was given P100 million in pork barrel for infrastructure projects for the second half of 2001. Last year, each was allocated P200 million.

Arroyo is the only senator who did not touch his pork barrel allocation of P300 million for 2001 and 2002. The money will revert to the National Treasury. Except for Arroyo and Osmeña III, all senators used their pork barrel allocation for 2002.

The biggest spenders in the Senate from January to December 2001 were Sen. Blas Ople, P13.14 million; Senate President Franklin Drilon, P13.12 million; Sen. Vicente Sotto III, P13.07 million; and Sen. Ramon Magsaysay, P13.01 million. Majority Leader Loren Legarda spent P11.77 million.

Ople, former chair of the Senate foreign relations committee and now foreign secretary, spent P1.23 million for foreign travel and P194,700 for local travel. He was followed by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, who spent P658,285 for foreign travel and P212,400 for local travel.

All told, taxpayers coughed up more than P277 million to maintain 24 senators in 2001, or an average of P11.5 million for each senator.



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SportsTV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Sacramento vs New Jersey, 8:30 a.m. (r - 9 p.m.), Star Sports, Portland vs San Antonio, 11 a.m. (r - 9 p.m.), Solar Sports

NBA Inside Stuff, 8:30 p.m., Star Sports

GOLF: Inside the PGA Tour, 11 a.m. (r - 2:30 p.m.), Star Sports

102 AWARDEES

PSA honors top athletes tonight

MACAPAGAL

PACQUIAO

COJUANGCO-JAWORSKI

THE PHILIPPINE Sportswriters Association honors the country's sports stars tonight when it holds the PSA Annual Awards at the Coral Ballroom of the Holiday Inn Manila.

Leading the awardees in the gala affair starting at 7 p.m. are world boxing champion Manny Pacquiao and Asian Games equestrian gold medalist Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski.

Pacquiao and Cojuangco will receive the Sportsman and Sportswoman of the Year awards as top athletes of 2002 in rites to be graced by sports leaders, corporate sponsors, and members of the country's oldest news organization.

The hosts are basketball star Alex Comptom and sportscaster Patricia Bermudez. It will be telecast by NBN-4.

The PSA is presenting major awards to the top achievers in professional and amateur basketball, bowling, billiards, boxing, golf and horseracing and citations to Asian Games silver and bronze medalists and winners in international competitions.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has been invited to be the main guest of honor and speaker. Other sports leaders expected to attend are Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain and House committee on youth and sports chair Monico Puentevella, Games and Amusements Board chair Eduardo Villanueva, Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit, International Olympic Committee representative Frank Elizalde and presidents of the national sports associations.

Other sports leaders invited are former International Chess Federation (Fide) president Florencio Campomanes, former PSC chair Philip Ella Juico, former Project: Gintong Alay executive director Michael Keon, former POC president Julian Malonzo and former GAB chair and PSC commissioner Dominador Cepeda.

Awardees who have not received their invitations are requested to pick them up at the reception table before 7 p.m. Attire is formal. The event is sponsored by Red Bull, Agfa and Photokina and supported by Samsung, San Miguel Corporation, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Philippine Sports Commission and adidas.

The complete list of awardees:

Top Athletes: Manny Pacquiao (boxing); Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski (equestrian);

Major Awardees: Willie Miller (pro basketball), Enrico Villanueva (amateur basketball), Django Bustamante/Antonio Lining, Efren Reyes (billiards), Paeng Nepomuceno/RJ Bautista, Liza del Rosario (bowling), Angelo Que, Dottie Ardina, Jayvie Agojo (amateur golf), Wind Blown (horse of the year).

PSA President's Award: Ateneo Blue Eagles/Coach Joel Banal

Special Award: Cris Maralit

Athletes Citations:

Asian Games silver medalists: Botchok Rey, CJ Suarez, Chester King (men's Trios, bowling), Warren Kiamco (9 ball singles, billiards), Liza del Rosario, Irene Garcia-Benitez, Liza Clutario, Jojo Canare, Kathlyn Ann Lopez, Cecille Yap (women's five-player team, bowling), Toni Leviste, Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski, Danielle Cojuangco, Michel Barrera (showjumping team event, equestrian), Marvin Sicomen (52 kg, sanshou, wushu), Rexel Nganhayna (56 kg, sanshou, wushu).

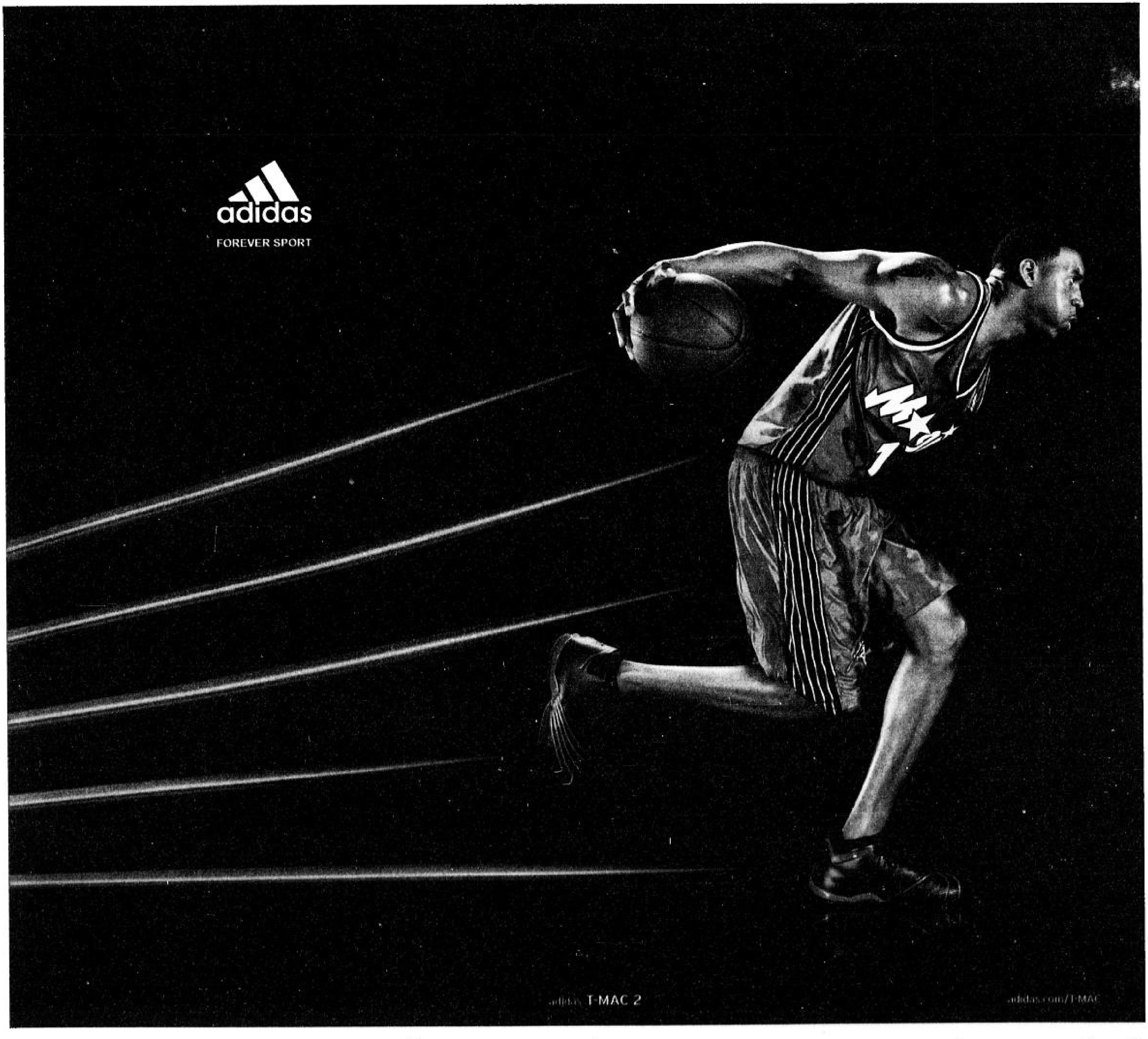
Asian Games bronze medalists: Liza Clutario (ladies singles, bowling), Alvin Amposta-Nestor Cordova (men's lightweight double sculls, rowing), Jethron Dionisio (men's individual trap, shooting), Jethro Dionisio, Eric Ang, Jaime Recio (men's team trap, shooting), Ria Quiazon, Heidi Chua, Carmelette Villaroman (women's team, golf), Tshomlee Go (men's flyweight, taekwondo), Daleen Cordero (women's semiflyweight, taekwondo), Veronica Domingo (women's welteweight, taekwondo), Dindo Simpao (men's middleweight, taekwondo), Sally Solis (women's middleweight, taekwondo), Gretchen Malalad (60 kg kumite, karatedo), Cherli Tugday (kata individual, karatedo), Bobby Co (men's taijiquan, wushu), Eduard Folayang (65 kg, sanshou, wushu), Arvin Ting (changcuan combined 3 events, wushu).

International competitions-winners: Angelo Que, Jerome Delariarte, Juvic Pagunsan, RP golf Team, World Amateur Golf), Raul Ramon Arambulo (Asian Archery Championships), Enzo Pastor (Asian Formula Racing, Adeline Dumapong, Africita Salazar, Roderick Canta, Paz Enano (Sports for Specially Abled, FESPIC Games), Marcus Valda (Southeast Asian wrestling), Rener Mercado/Judity Ann Melencio, Bong Marquez/Belinda Adora (Asia-Pacific Dance Sport).

Lifetime Achievement Awards: Jun Bernardino, Rudy Salud, Leo Prieto (individual), Coke Go-for-Goal, Metropolitan Chess Club, Milo, San Miguel Corp. (corporate)

Special Citations: adidas, Agfa, Dance Sport Council of the Philippines, FedEx, German Initiative in Football Towards Peace in Mindanao (GIFT), Gloria Garchitorena-Goloy/Gregorio Antonio, Kenneth San Andres, Manila Sports Council, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Philippine Sports Commission, Red Bull.

Posthumous Awards: Charlie Badion, Art Borjal, Alex Clarino, Eddie Decena, Ben Flores, Ben Francisco, Edilberto Gamilla, Eddie Lim, Rudy Navarro, Vincent Rodriguez, Jose Sering, Jack Tanuan, Martin Urra, Zaldy Zshornack.



ICTSI secures playoff berth

GAMES TOMORROW *(Quezon Convention Center)*
2 p.m.--Sunkist vs ICTSI
4 p.m.--Welcoat vs Dazz

By Dennis U. Eroa

MARK Cardona scattered 20 points as ICTSI-La Salle downed Cheeseballs-Shark, 75-67, last night to assure itself of a playoff berth in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

Cardona, known for his unorthodox shots and pesky defense, starred in the Archers' blistering third quarter breakaway. He finished with 20 points as ICTSI improved its record to 7-4. ICTSI needs to beat LBC-Batangas twice for a semis slot.

In the second game, John-O beat Montaña. 78-63.

Scores:

ICTSI 75--Cardona 20, Yap 17, Hugnatan 12, Dacia 9, Franco 6, Johnson 5, Sta. Maria 4, Uy 2, Ferrer 0, Yeo 0, Manalo 0.

CHEESEBALLS 67--Padilla 17, Valdez 14, Robinson 11, Abadia 5, Epondulan 4, Castro 4, Omolon 4, Ortega 2, Basilides 2, Ybañez 2, Junio 2, Sanz 2, Coching 0, Magsumbol 0.

Quarters: 18-12, 34-32, 57-49, 75-67.

GMA to Eric: Win 2005 SEAG title

By Marc Anthony Reyes

BUHAIN

PRESIDENT Arroyo has ordered the Philippine Sports Commission to help maximize the country's chances of finally nailing the overall championship in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain said Ms Arroyo told him over the weekend to prioritize events where the country holds big chances of winning.

Buhain said the President singled out equestrian, which won for the country a gold and a silver during last year's Busan Asian Games.

In fact, the President asked Buhain and Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation chair Ephraim Genuino to initiate the construction of an equestrian field inside the Pagcor-owned land in Parañaque.

"We have no choice but win the overall title in the 2005 Philippine SEA Games," said Buhain, who won seven gold medals when the country achieved its best finish of second place overall during the SEAG in 1991 held here.

Buhain, who celebrates his first anniversary yesterday as sports czar, said the country needs to win at least 40 golds to place in the Vietnam SEAG slated in December.

"I told the President that if we could at least manage to be in the top three in Vietnam, then we have a strong chance of winning the overall championship in 2005," said Buhain.

Buhain added that the agency managed to successfully tap the private sector support which translated to P30.8 million in cash or in kind for the country's sports development program.

"It was a very good year," said Buhain of 2002. "In just 11 months, we were able to get not only the private sector to be involved in sports but also the public through several road-shows and free concerts we held for the benefit of the athletes."

To start the year, Buhain said he will try to get a line budget for the Palarong Pambansa which for the past three years has been getting its funds from several sources.

"We want to convince Congress and the Senate that we need to have a regular source of budget like it used to be when the Palaro is being run by the Department of Education," said Buhain.

He added that the PSC will also try to start availing of the law which gives the agency a three percent share from every imported sports equipment.

Spring routs RP, 97-70

REIGNING national champion Spring Cooking Oil blasted RP Burlington, 97-70, Wednesday at the UE gym to clinch a final slot in the PICAA YKL Invitational basketball championship.

Ricky Ricafuente, Carlo Espiritu, Mar Reyes and Godofredo Cuevas scored in double figures to power the Cooking Oil Masters to their sixth straight victory in the tourney sponsored by Simco Traders, Bestank, YKL Color Films and Fronte Motors.

Team owner Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla's Spring cagers jumped to a 25-12 lead in the first quarter and then stepped on the gas some more in the remaining 30 minutes to win with plenty to spare despite the 27-point performance of Burlington's Bryan Facundo.

"I'm proud of the boys," said Padilla, the national pistol shooting champion. "They showed a lot of intensity." The Cooking Oil Masters will meet the winner of the other semifinal match between Wang's Ball Club and University of the East in the finals set on Jan. 16 at the YMCA gym in Binondo.

Wang's and UE, the Bantay Bata and Champions' League winner, will clash on Tuesday, Jan. 14.

Scores:

SPRING 97—Ricafuente 13, Espiritu 11, Reyes 10, Cuevas 10, Limbo 8, Habelito 8, Bautista 7, Manuel 6, Canoza 6, Simpas 6, Saygo 5, Corbin 5, Garcia 4.

RP BURLINGTON 70—Facundo 27, Fernandez 9, Catamora 8, Astorga 7, Regala 7, Argente 5, Borja 3, Lindaya 2, Balboa 2.

Quarters: 25-12, 51-32, 80-49, 97-70.

Jenz, J.R. power RP to the lead

JENZ Tecson scored a 73 and J.R. Tanpinco backed him up with a 78 yesterday to power the Philippines into the top in the battle for team honors in the sixth Samsung Philippine International Junior Golf Championship.

Together with their first day 156, the Filipino duo would start in today's final round at 307 with a four-stroke lead over South Korea, which scored 154 and six up over Malaysia, which made 157.

Choo Tze Huang of Singapore, continuing to play from good to bad at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club's East Course, limped home with an 80 and the room at the top of the Class A is now very crowded.

Choo, who won the overall title last year by playing in Class B, started with a 71 then collapsed with a 77 the next day. Together with that eight over par 80, Choo has 228–and three players, including two from the Philippines are breathing down his neck.

Not only that, two other Filipinos–Holen Juan Superal and his older sister Crystal are also in serious contention in their own divisions.

Malaysia's Anis Helmi carded a 75 to remain Choo's closest pursuer for either the Class A crown or the overall trophy at 229. The best scorer among players in Classes A and B will win the overall title.

Tecson, one of the Philippines' leading juniors, finally played his potential with that 73 to move up from fifth to third at 231 in Class A, while Allan Minoza, Frankie's nephew, carded a 76 to remain in contention with 232.

Holen Juan, son of touring pro Wendy and grandson of the late touring pro Wenceslao Superal, shot a 70 to go with his earlier 76 to keep the boys' Class D lead with 146.

Korean teenager Samsung winner

KEVIN Lee, a vacationing teenager from Korea, walked into The Orchard Golf recently and found himself needing to extend his visit as he made it along with nine others to the grand finals of the Samsung Putting Challenge.

Lee, a 2-handicapper, made 15 out of the standard 18 and, like IG Gutierrez, was among the jungolf winners at The Orchard, the penultimate stage of an elimination series that is set to end at Wack Wack on Jan. 18-19.

Wack Wack has also agreed to host the grand finals on Feb. 1 where all qualifiers from the eight legs will assemble.

It was Roberto Bobbis who emerged with the lowest score, giving him one of the four men's slots. The others were won by Honesto Soriano (14), Henry Uy (14) and Luis Cebrero Jr. (17).

The other qualifiers were Catalino Genovea (16) and Vic Florentino (14) in the seniors side and Cecille del Rosario (18) and Cristy Topacio (18) in the ladies category.

Sponsored by Samsung as its first major undertaking in golf, the putting series is part of a three-in-one event that also covers the Amateur Tour and the Interscholastics. The co-sponsors are Taylor Made adidas, Hotshots Flame-Grilled Burgers, Gatorade, Fila, Custom Clubmakers and Greg Norman Shirts by Planet Sports.

Yao stars for victorious Rockets

ORLANDO, Florida—Chinese rookie Yao Ming had 23 points and 11 rebounds as the Houston Rockets broke an 11-year losing streak in Orlando to beat the Magic, 91-81.

Steve Francis scored 12 of his 16 points in the third quarter and Cuttino Mobley had 14 points, nine rebounds and five assists. Eddie Griffin added 12 points, nine rebounds and four blocked shots.

The Rockets made 25 of 26 free throws and held a 52-34 advantage in rebounds, but turned the ball over 22 times.

The Magic, who had won 14 of 15 from Houston, shot 35.6 percent, including 4-for-15 on 3-pointers. They also had nine shots blocked, eight in the first half. Tracy McGrady scored 27 points but shot 10-for-26. Mike Miller was 3-for-17—missing his last 13 shots—for eight points.

COMPLETE RESULTS: New York 87, Indiana 89; Houston 91, Orlando 81; Detroit 103, Philadelphia 94 (OT); Washington 101, Chicago 98; Dallas 117, Atlanta 99; Minnesota 102, Golden State 95; Denver 86, Miami 76; Boston 93, New Orleans 83; Utah 99, Phoenix 93; San Antonio 106, Seattle 95; LA Clippers 103, Memphis 95. *AP*

Pasay derby stakes P.3M tonight

A CASH prize of P300,000 awaits the winners in tonight's special 4-cock derby at Pasay City Cockpit, which will start at 7 p.m. Sponsors are Sagupaan Complexor 3000 and Sagupaan Mite Free.

Partners Boyet Medina and Gerald Go will host the event to be assisted by pit managers Oscar Gonzales, Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano.

Invited by the derby hosts are well-known cockers like Coun. Ferdie Eusebio, Tony Lasala, Benjie Lim, William Co, lawyer Romero Yu, Mayor Toto Lacson, Ansel Cordura, Vice Mayor Nestor Mercado, Capt. Abong Guce, Jun Marasigan and Dicky Lim, among others.

Meanwhile, the much-awaited Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association Inaugural 4-Cock Derby is all set on Jan. 17 with more than 30 sure entries lined up.

Also slated is a 4-cock event on Jan. 24 with Cito Manansala as host, and a 5-cocker on Jan. 31 (Jun Marasigan).

For inquiries, call 816-6750, 843-1890 and 843-1746.

Bad product

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

I WAS told that the reason PBA Commissioner Noli Eala would penalize the no-show players in today's PBA Camp is because past PBA Camps were virtual failures. Failures in the sense that past PBA Camps were snubbed by many cagers wanting to join the PBA.

If that was the case, then there's something awfully wrong with the PBA Camp. It's got to be reviewed before sanctions are to be imposed at all. Even your own son, you can't force him to eat your *adobo* if he thinks your *adobo* doesn't suit his taste buds.

If the product is bad, why ram it into one's throat? If that's not torture, what is?

Listen, who scheduled the PBA Camp at the SM Megamall parking lot? That alone was a mistake; it insulted the dignity of players because you are to fry them under the sun, not to mention the flooring for dishing out their wares is concrete cement. What is this, a farce?

Anyway, I commend Eala for softening his stand: No sanctions to absentees with valid reasons. I have always believed that lawyers, like grandmasters, know when to resign.

But what is a valid reason, and what is not?

■

Here's to the best and the brightest of 2002, led by world boxing champion Manny Pacquiao and Asiad equestrian heroine Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski. You deserve to be feted tonight by the Philippine Sportswriters Association. But I have one prayer: That the honor will not poison your mind. Be guided by Henry Austin Dobson's admonition: "Fame is a food that dead men eat, I have no stomach for such meat."

RACING TIPS

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Race 3--1. Maayo Kaayo 2. Rapid Strike
Race 4--1. Kayang Kaya/Baby Lite 2. Cosanne 3. Velocity 4. Mrs. Big 4. Royal Lantana
Race 5--1. Sir Olizon 2. Silver Angel 3. Aya's Star
Race 6--1. Silver Eagle 2. Juan Marco 3. Rosa Valentina 4. Little Sam 5. Ready Aim Fire
Race 7--1. Golden Disc 2. Candy's Angel 3. Selectee 4. Beautiful Task 5. Rikitik
Race 8--1. Silver Cho Cho 2. Prince of Africa 3. Best Gift 4. Real Charm
Race 9--1. Speed Day 2. Do It David/Romario 3. Real Piker Master 4. Vigor 5. Premiere Stock
Race 10--1. Dedicated 2. Great Hill 3. My Prayer 4. Modulo Queen 5. Crisel Joy 6. Shen Zhen Girl

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, Tommy Baliguas fired a 78 to capture Class A honors in the Philippine Junior Golf Development Association golf tournament at the Negros Occidental course.

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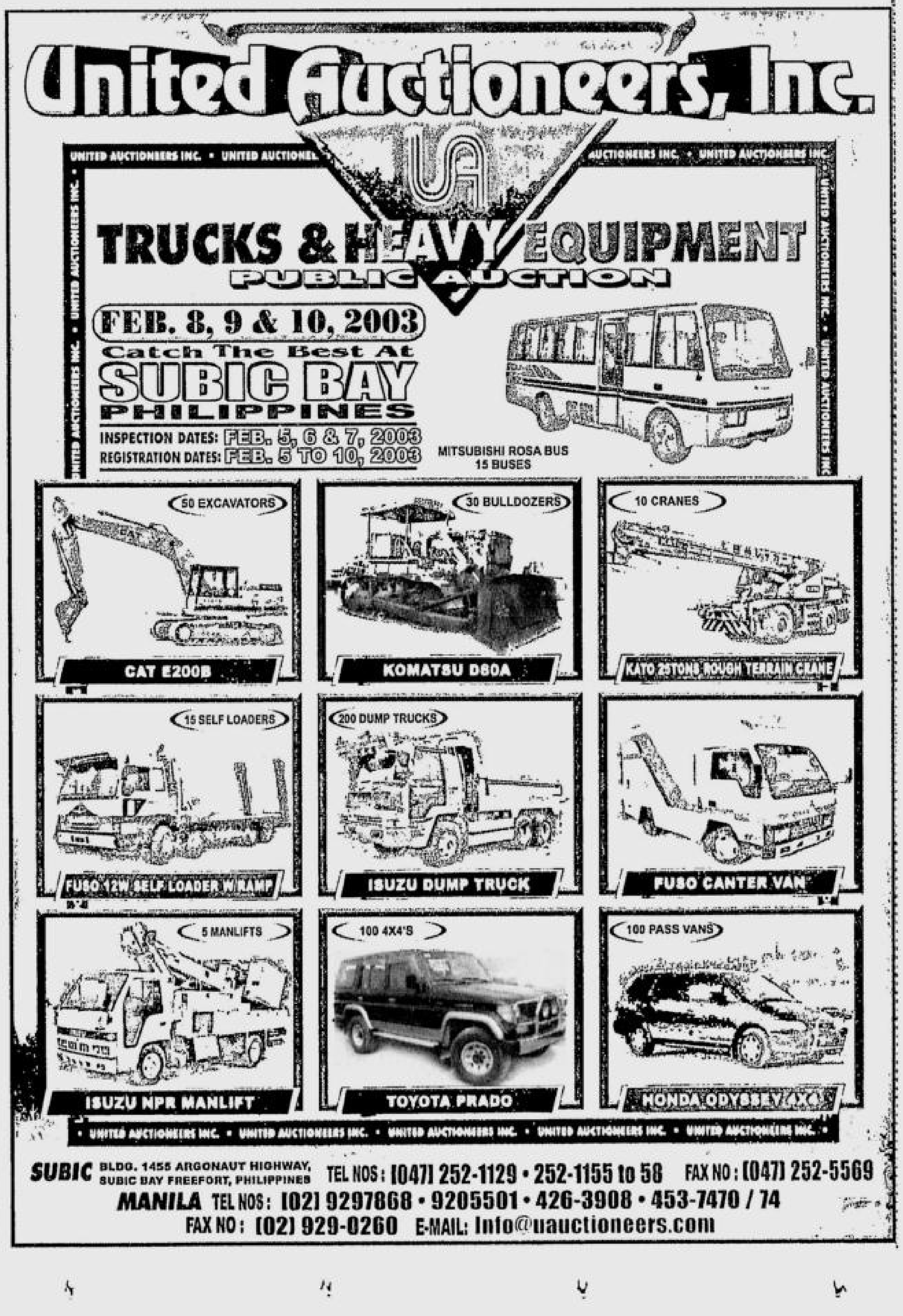

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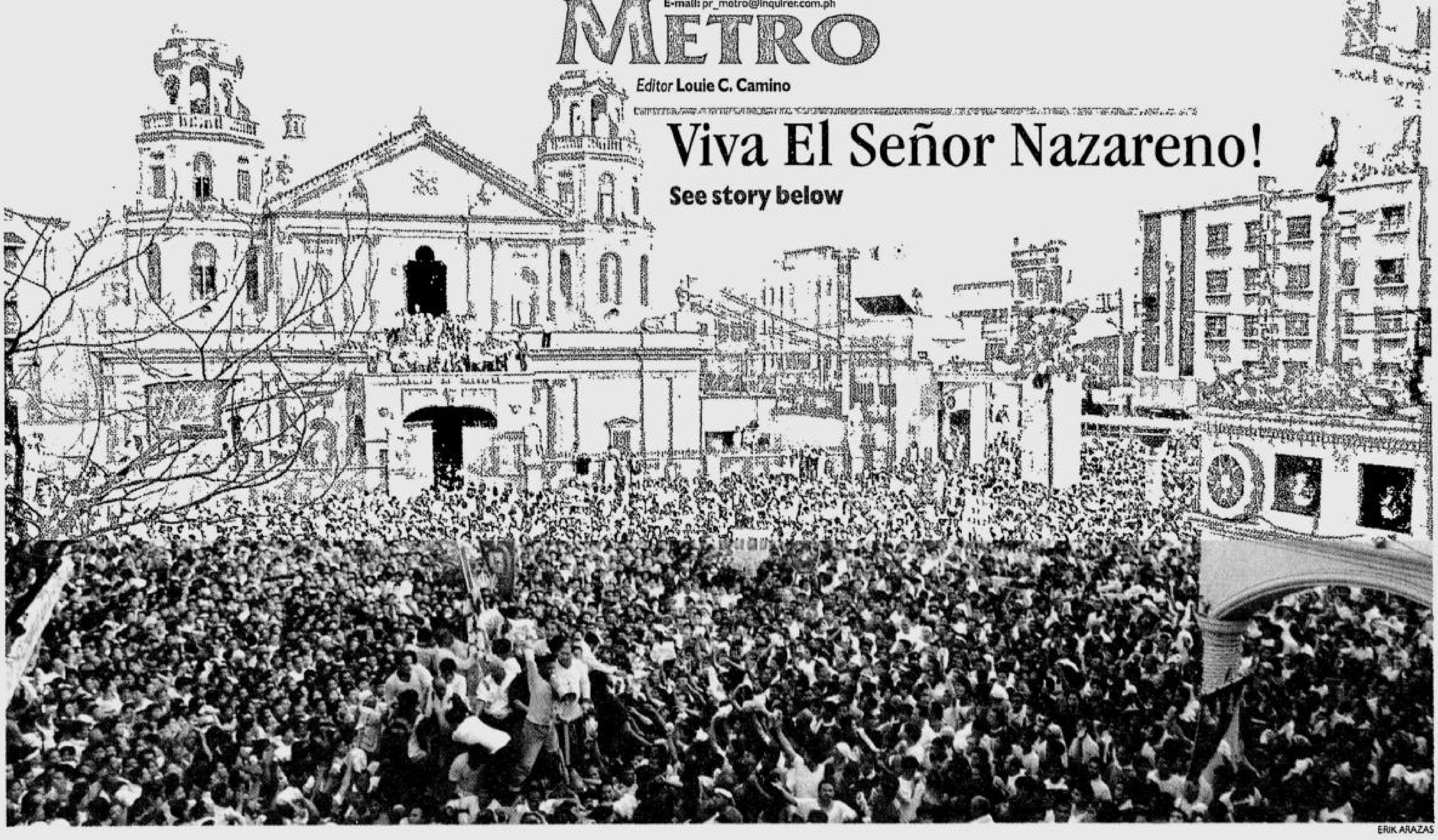
Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Viva El Señor Nazareno!

See story below



ERIK ARAZAS

Vilma Santos, Joey Marquez sued for appearing in movies

By Jerome Aning and Marinel R. Cruz

LIPA City Mayor Vilma Santos, Paranaque City Mayor Joey Marquez and Pampanga Governor Lito Lapid will have to explain why they still appear in movies and television shows after they were elected as local chief executives.

The Social Justice Society, a small political party composed mostly of lawyers, has included the three as respondents in a lawsuit questioning why mayors and governors are allowed to exercise their profession as artists in violation of Section 90 of the Local Government Code that prohibits elected local officials from "practicing their profession or engaging in any occupation other than the exercises of their functions as local executives."

MARQUEZ

SANTOS

LAPID

SJS president Samson Alcantara said in his seven-page petition that "they are impleaded herein as respondents as their movie and political careers will certainly be affected by the decision that may be rendered by his court." .

The case for declaratory relief is being heard by Judge Cesar Solis of the Manila Regional Trial Court.

The SJS said that based on the LGC, "only doctors of medicine may practice their profession even during official hours of work and only on occasion of emergency. But they are not allowed to get compensation."

Alcantara said the SJS' position is further strengthened by Section 7 of Republic Act No. 6713, or the code of conduct and ethical standards for public officials and employees.

The provision declares unlawful for government officials and employees "to engage in private practice of their profession, unless authorized by the Constitution or law, provided that such practice will not conflict or tend to conflict with official functions."

But Santos said that doing a movie once a year "does not keep me from performing my duties as a mayor."

She said being an actor is her only bread and butter. "Unless I steal, it is only through appearing in movies that I can earn a living," she said.

Noting that she is not the only government official who appears in movies, Santos said, "if they are going to pursue the case against us, we will be ready to defend ourselves."

Marquez and Lapid could not be reached for comment.

The group earlier named Interior and Local Secretary Jose Lina as the lone respondent in the case.

Alcantara said the appearance of incumbent mayors and governors in movies and television programs "enhances their income but reduces considerably the time that they should devote to their constituents."

Alcantara argued that "governors and mayors are considered as such 24 hours a day" and that their movie appearances give them "undue advantage over their opponents who are not actors or actresses, in future elections."

Viva El Señor Nazareno!

By Philip Tubeza

FOR BAREFOOTED devotees of the Black Nazarene and some local politicians, all roads converged yesterday in Quiapo, Manila for the celebration of the Feast of the Black Nazarene.

Police said about 200,000 people flocked to Quiapo Church, but only about 50 people suffered minor injuries like cuts and bruises when they tried to get near the miraculous image of the Black Nazarene. No major incidents were reported as of press time yesterday.

Only Ernesto Gustera, 46, of Cavite, suffered a serious injury to his spine after he fell outside the Quiapo Church, said Marlon Felix, of the Office of Civil Defense.

Three photographers also fell victim to pick pockets while covering the event, police said.

Cris Mananquil lost P200, Boy Namura a P2,000 camera, and Turo Lacson a flash bulb.

Desi Salvador, long-time president of the Comite de Festejos de Quiapo, said people from around Metro Manila and from nearby provinces like Bulacan and Rizal started arriving at about 4 a.m. yesterday.

Masses were said every hour in the church beginning at 4 a.m., with the last mass offered at 9 p.m.

Organizers also erected an electronic screen in Plaza Miranda for those who could not get inside the church, Salvador said.

He said that when the procession began at 1:30 p.m., there were already about 200,000 people in and around the church.

Salvador said Sen. John Osmeña, Mayor Lito Atienza, Western Police District Director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong, Manila Councilor Miles Roces and National Security Adviser Roilo Golez watched a brass band competition in the morning.

At 10:30 a.m., Sen. Robert Barbers attended Mass in the church. Sen. Noli De Castro was also seen among the crowd later in the day.

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JAN 10, FRIDAY 422-9877

'Political harassment,' says congressmen of mayors' move to amend local gov't code

By Tina Santos

MAYORS and congressmen yesterday clashed anew over the local chief executives' proposal to have first say on national government projects, particularly those being undertaken by the lawmakers in their turf.

Majority of Metro Manila mayors want to approve national government projects first before they can be implemented in their territories.

But the so-called National Capital Region (NCR) bloc of congressmen strongly opposed the proposal, describing the move as "politically motivated and mere political harassment."

In their regular monthly meeting hosted by Caloocan mayor Rey Malonzo in city hall, eight of the 17 local chief executivės in Metro Manila pushed for the inclusion of the measure in the current moves to amend the local government code (LGC).

The mayors said the national government should coordinate with the local government and secure their approval regarding projects they want to undertake in their locality.

They argued that national projects uncoordinated with the LGUs would only result in waste of resources.

These are Mayors Rey Malonzo (Caloocan), Lito Atienza (Manila), Toby Tiangco (Navotas), Sigfrido Tinga (Taguig), Marides Fernando (Marikina), Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte (Quezon City), Amado Vicencio (Malabon), Rosendo Capco (Pateros).

Representatives Enrico "Recom" Echiverri (Caloocan City-District 1) and Magtanggol "Magi" Gunigundo (Valenzuela City District 2) said the local chief's move "was politically-motivated and would not amount to anything good because it would violate the existing laws."

They said they would oppose the mayors' move to push for amendments on certain provisions in the LGC.

"Malonzo should better concentrate on his job in providing the much-needed services of the city residents instead of meddling with the lawmakers' programs," Echiverri said, adding that the mayor's latest executive order requiring his approval for projects in the city is "bureaucratic red tape."

He said that most of the projects being undertaken by the congressmen were submitted by various concerned government agencies and were the result of careful evaluation before they were implemented.

Magtanggol said the mayor's move would violate the separation of executive and legislative branches.

"The mayors want to subordinate the congressmen which has no legal basis. That is basically politically-motivated," Gunigundo said.

Malabon-Navotas Rep. Ricky Sandoval said he was not totally against the mayors' move adding that they could even request from him what kind of projects they want to undertake that would need congressional funding.

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Datumanong: DPWH will be BF's acid test

By Blanche Rivera, Leila Salaverria and Christian Esguerra

TAKE it from someone who's been there, done that.

Tough and ruthless Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chair Bayani Fernando may have found his match in the graft-ridden Department of Public Works and Highways.

Outgoing DPWH Secretary Simeon Datumanong said yesterday that handling the DPWH along with the MMDA would be "an acid test" for Fernando, touted among many sectors for his hard-line style of management.

Datumanong further said that Fernando should be open to changes in his administrative tack if the MMDA chair's current style does not work in the DPWH.

"I'd like to give him a chance to try his management style in the DPWH," Datumanong said in a phone interview yesterday. "If it's not apt, then maybe we can make some changes."

He said Fernando's experience as a local official would help in handling DPWH projects that would have a direct effect on local communities.

Fernando was a long-time mayor of Marikina City.

"I hope he can address it," Datumanong said when asked if he believed Fernando can eliminate graft and corruption in one of the the country's most corrupt agencies.

He said Fernando's expertise as an engineer and his hard work in the MMDA showed him to be a good choice as DPWH secretary.

Pasay Mayor Wenceslao Trinidad, spokesperson of the Metro Manila Mayors' League, echoed what Datumanong has to say about Fernando.

Trinidad said Fernando, as MMDA and DPWH head, "can implement a lot of projects and policies for the development of Metro Manila and also the countryside."

"His current status will surely displease illegal sidewalk vendors and squatters, but it will be good for all in the long run," he said.

On his part, Fernando promises an action-packed term as MMDA chair and DPWH secretary.

In a phone interview yesterday, Fernando said he is confident that he will be able to oversee the operations of the two government agencies.

"These agencies have their own organizations," he told the INQUIRER. "I would be in charge of making policy decisions. The idea is to expand what I did in Marikina to Metro Manila, and now, to the whole country."

His management style is not all that he would bring to the DPWH. He also vowed that his controversial sidewalk clearing drive would go nationwide.

"We'll implement the sidewalk clearing campaign all over the country," he said. "We have invested so much for our roadways, it's time we learn to value and use it."

But as Fernando is making plans, urban poor groups are questioning Fernando's right to lord it over two offices.

Members of the Kilusang Mayo Uno held a rally outside the MMDA office in Makati yesterday, sounding the warning that Fernando could aggravate the graft in the DPWH because of his vested interest as owner of a construction firm.

"We loathe Fernando's extreme display of hunger for power," the group said in a statement. "With his newfound status at the DPWH, Fernando could use his influence and political position to advance his family's interests in the real estate and building business."

The group also questioned the constitutionality of Fernando's two appointments.

Pedring Fadrigon of the Metro Manila Vendors Alliance also called on Fernando to resign both positions.

"We fear that he will bring his ruthless style in dealing with sidewalk vendors to other parts of the country," he said. "(If he does that), the sidewalk vendors in the province will be up in arms."

Members of the Urban Poor Associates (UPA), described Fernando's positions as "the poor's worst nightmare."

"Just imagine how many informal settlers would lose their homes once Fernando implements his oppressive policies, not only in Metro Manila, but all over the Philippines," said Ted Añana, UPA assistant coordinator.

A MAN ponders his fate after he lost his home in a fire that hit a squatters' colony on Ermin Garcia Street in Kamias, Quezon City. Over 800 families lost their homes in Wednesday's fire. JOAN BONDOC

QC fire victims have nowhere else to go

By Agnes Donato

QUEZON City Mayor Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte Jr. yesterday said that City Hall has yet to find a suitable arrangement for the estimated 800 families rendered homeless by a big fire in a squatter community in Cubao on Wednesday.

"I'm still trying to figure out what to do with the fire victims," said Belmonte, who was at the Eulogio Rodriguez Elementary School where the victims were temporarily staying.

In an interview, Belmonte said that he had already arranged to meet with a Mr. Facundo, who reportedly owns the lot the squatters occupied. Facundo is also the owner of the neighboring Nepa-Q Mart.

"I plan to clarify with him if he would be willing to sell the lot to the people," the mayor said. "If not, maybe we can discuss some possible arrangements for them."

"I just don't know how we can relocate this many people right away," he said. "I think the best thing to do right now is to come to some terms, either on a permanent or temporary basis."

Has GMA forgotten Oscar Orbos?

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

YOU GET all sorts of proposals from friends and enemies alike.

It's up to you whether to bite or not.

Of course, there are proposals which, as Don Vito Corleone loved to put it, you can't refuse.

Now comes this call from the Pangasinan bloc which says it is urging President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to tap Oca Orbos.

Of course, you know who Oscar Orbos is.

He was already the famous OO, before he hit it big with Winnie Monsod in the high-rating "Debate" talk show on GMA 7.

Your reporter has taken time out to shove it out with the sweltering crowd in the Quiapo District fiesta.

So permit me to run a story on that call to GMA, as faxed by a friend, Cris Mischelena, who knows OO best. It's one proposal we can't refuse.

***

Here is the press release:

Influential political and business leaders from Pangasinan want President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to tap Oscar Orbos, a fellow Pangasinense who is not only credible but is also competent and acceptable to the people.

Former information minister Gregorio Cendaña, now president of the Pangasinan Economic Development Foundation Inc. (PEDFI), said "our support for Orbos is simply just to take the cue from Speaker Jose De Venecia's call for a unity government, and the President's queen's gambit or sacrifice in giving up her 2004 presidential bid."

Cendaña stressed that "if GMA wants to take off with a fresh start, she must also surround herself with top-caliber and competent executives of impeccable integrity to implement her eight-point development agenda over the next 18 months."

He said GMA should tap the likes of Orbos, regardless of their political affiliation, provided they are willing to support the President's vision, programs and policy directions.

"Whether it is a unity government of personalities or of issues, Orbos represents both and is now emerging to be the epitome of what GMA really needs now," Cendaña said.

"Although Orbos lost to GMA during their vice presidential fight in 1998, Orbos is a man of principle who does not take things personally. He is known to stand more on issues and policies," Cendaña said.

***

Former GMA Channel 7 chief honcho Menardo Jimenez, PEDFI chairman, said "we support Orbos not because he is a fellow Pangasinense, but more so because of the proven track record, his credentials, his moral ascendancy and his capability in surmounting a crisis."

"If you can recall, we were in a Gulf crisis in 1991 when Oca was executive secretary of former President Cory Aquino. Today, we are again entering into another Gulf crisis and we probably need another Oca," Jimenez said.

In 1991, Jimenez said Orbos mobilized the support of the private sector, particularly PLDT, to offer free phone lines for families of overseas contract workers trapped in the Gulf War.

Earlier, Fr. Anton Pascual, spiritual leader of the El Shaddai Movement, also declared that GMA should consider Orbos in her Cabinet. After all, both share the same work ethic and stellar track record.

Orbos, who popularized buzzwords like "fast-track" and "doables," can probably do another "doable" and "fasttrack" approach to programs and projects, despite GMA's limited 18-month period, Fr. Pascual said.

Orbos also introduced a new work ethic, and even made a fashion statement by "rolling up the sleeves of his barong Tagalog as a gesture of buckling down to serious work."

"His record of integrity and moral ascendancy are impeccable. Orbos has a good name to protect. His old folks sent all of his brothers to a seminary. One became a priest. Fr. Jerry Orbos, a week-end columnist of the Philippine Daily Inquirer."

Orbos and GMA are not really on opposite sides of the fence. Academically, both are economists who were somehow together at the UP School of Economics.

Kilosbayan forum

LAWYER Katrina Legarda and Social Weather Stations head Mahar Mangahas will be the guest speakers at the Kilosbayan Forum tomorrow, at 2 p.m., at Shalom Center, 1660 LM Guerrero Street, Malate, Manila, Kilosbayan president Jovito R. Salonga said yesterday.

Legarda will talk on "The Decision of GMA Not To Run in 2004," while Dr. Mangahas will speak on the two-year performance of GMA.

A panel of Kilosbayan leaders, headed by Ambassador Sedfrey Ordoñez, will ask questions during the open forum following the speeches.

METROBRIEFS

Marikina boy killed in fire

A YEAR-OLD boy died in a fire that also destroyed property worth about P3 million in a densely populated residential area in Marikina City early Tuesday night. Fire investigators said baby Arlo Handig, of Barangay Concepcion Uno, Marikina City, was apparently alone in the house when the fire broke out. Investigation showed that the 44-minute blaze started in a house on Palay Street at 6:19 p.m., and quickly spread to 20 other lightly built houses. FO2 Joven Juasque of the Marikina City fire station said that investigators are still trying to determine the cause of the fire. *Nelson Flores*

Caloocan hookers arrested

POLICE on Tuesday arrested four women for allegedly selling their bodies right inside inside the Ever Gotesco Grand Central Mall on Rizal Avenue, Monumento, Caloocan City. According to Insp. Romeo Onte of the Caloocan police, a plainclothesman acquired the "services" of a suspect for P300 inside the mall at around 4 p.m. When the suspect in turn led the plainclothesman to her three cohorts, backup officers closed in and arrested the suspected prostitutes, identified as Sherly Lamado, 23, of Navotas, Geraldine Mananon, 27, of Caloocan, Gemma Reyes, 31, of Valenzuela, and Joan Gonzales, 21, of Malabon. Police saids that the mall has become the hangout of dozens of women in the sex trade. *Tina Santos*

Tondo man stabbed dead

ERIC R. Villarin was killed over a coin game in Tondo, Manila on Tuesday. Villarin, of Capulong Street, Tondo, Manila, did not make it alive to the hospital after his own playmates stabbed him dead, said Detective William Gondranlos of the Western Police District. Gondranlos said the victim and several other men were playing cara y cruz at around 3 a.m. at the corner of Capulong and Iverside streets in Tondo, when a quarrel erupted among them, which led to a free-for-all. When the brawl ended, Villarin was slumped on the ground, bleeding. The victim died on the way to the Jose R. Reyes Memorial Medical Center, Gondranlos said. *Philip Tubeza*

QC police official robbed

A RANKING officer of the Central Police District on Tuesday accused his assistant of stealing his service firearm. Senior Supt. Oscar Marinas, 52, of San Isidro, Parañaque City and CPD deputy director for operations, filed qualified theft charges against his man Friday Jonathan Romero, 25, of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. Marinas said Romero forcibly entered his bedroom on Dec. 26, picked the lock of his cabinet and took his 9-mm Beretta pistol, magazine and ammunition. But it was only on Jan. 5 that Marinas discovered that his service firearm had been missing. Marinas later managed to trace Romero's whereabouts in Caloocan City. When Marinas confronted Romero about the missing firearm, the suspect admitted that he took the gun and pawned it to PO1 Lawrence Martinez for P1,000. Romero said he needed the money because of his sick child. *Alculn Papa*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, January 10, 2003
After Epiphany

1st Reading: 1 Jn 5:5-13
Gospel: Lk 5:12-16

One day in another town, a man came to Jesus covered with leprosy. On seeing him he bowed down to the ground, and said, "Lord, if you want to, you can make me clean."

Stretching out his hand, Jesus touched the man and said, "Yes, I want it. Be clean." In an instant the leprosy left him. Then Jesus instructed him, "Tell this to no one. But go and show yourself to the priest. Make an offering for your healing, as Moses prescribed; that should be a proof to the people."

But the news about Jesus spread all the more, and large crowds came to him to listen and be healed of their sickness. As for Jesus, he would often withdraw to solitary places and pray.

Commentary

The tentativeness of the leper's request for healing echoes one of the great questions of humanity. "Lord, if you want to, you can make me clean." If you wish. What is the deepest heart of the mystery of God? What are God's deepest intentions towards us? The absurdities and tragedies of life raise anguished questions: are we, as Shakespeare's King Lear insists, as flies to the gods, who make fools of us for sport? Is God indifferent to us? Does God truly care for us? The gift of the revelation of God in Jesus is God's unambiguous affirmation in him: "Yes, I want it. Be clean." The mystery of suffering is not removed, but illumined and made bearable by the witness Jesus, in his life, in his death and in his rising, gives of the Father's compassion and his passion to heal, to cleanse, to make whole.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

JUDICIAL ETHICS— **Misconduct**— Misconduct is defined as any unlawful conduct on the part of a person concerned in the administration of justice prejudicial to the rights of parties or to the right determination of the cause. It generally means wrongful, improper or unlawful conduct motivated by a premeditated, obstinate or intentional purpose. To justify the taking of drastic disciplinary action, the law requires that the error or mistake must be gross or patent, malicious, deliberate or in bad faith. [Citations omitted.] [En Banc, Justice Ynares-Santiago, Tan v. Cosico, A. M. No. CA-02-23, July 31, 2002]

DIGEST BY R. B. VERA

'Lapu Lapu' producer denies filing suit against MMFFP

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE REAL producer of the Metro Manila Film Festival Philippines (MMFFP) entry "Lapu Lapu" yesterday denied any association with the owner of production outfit Seeds of Zion Films Inc., who sued the MMFFP board of jurors for not giving "Lapu Lapu" the best picture award.

In a letter sent by his legal counsel Jocelyn A. Ong to Metro Manila Development Authority chair Bayani Fernando, "Lapu Lapu" producer Florante Castillo of Calinauan Cine Works expressed surprise when Esmaralito Marcos of Seeds of Zion Films Inc. claimed he was a representative of Calinauan Cine Works.

Ong said in the letter that "as far as my client is concerned, he has not given Mr. Marcos any authorization to represent him in any undertakings regarding the film."

She said her client sincerely appreciated "the chance given to him to show his film to the public" through the film fest, denying that Calinauan Cine Works has filed a complaint against the MMFFP board for not giving the movie an award.

"He believes in the integrity of the jurors and respects their decisions as to who should be declared winners of the festival," Ong said in the letter.

Marcos and "Lapu Lapu" director William Mayo on Thursday filed a complaint against the 9-member MMFFP board of jurors accusing them of deliberately violating the film festival's rules and regulations by "excluding the movie from its right to win the Gatpuno Antonio Villegas Cultural Award or the Best Picture Award."

In the complaint, Marcos and Mayo questioned the MMFFP board's criteria for the selection of a movie for best picture.

They said that "had the jurors not shown palpable bias and prejudice in favor of (Lily Monteverde) the owner of 'Mano Po' and 'Spirit Warriors,' the plaintiff's (Marcos and Mayo) entry could have won either the Gatpuno Award or the First Best Picture Award."

In the affidavit, Marcos claimed to be the co-producer of the movie with Mayo.

Monteverde's Regal Films romped off with 12 of awards, including the best picture and third best picture citations for "Mano Po" and "Spirit Warriors 2: The Short Cut," respectively, during the MMFFP's "Gabi Ng Parangal" last Dec. 27.

2 men robbed, slain in Makati

By Leila Salaverria

THE OWNER of a promotion agency and a stay-in security guard were killed after they were robbed in their Makati office yesterday.

Found dead inside the Jovic International Promotion Agency on Calatagan Street, Barangay Palanan, were Vicente Banzuela, president of the agency, and Lito Alvarez, the office's all around caretaker.

The agency's liaison officer Jun Muñoz found the men's bodies at around 9:30 a.m. yesterday as he reported for work, initial investigation showed.

Banzuela and Alvarez's bodies both bore multiple stab wounds. Alvarez was declared dead on the spot, while Banzuela was rushed to the St. Claire Hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival, police said.

Investigators said that the suspects intended to rob the victims because the latter's cellular phones were missing.

At press time, investigators are trying to determine if the suspects took anything else from the office. Probers are also getting the statements of witnesses.

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3	LASTIKMAN 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20
4	ANG AGIMAT 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30
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1	MANO PO
2	AGIMAT
3	DEKADA '70
4	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

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1 (DOLBY EX)	AGIMAT
2	MANO PO
3 (DTS ES)	DEKADA '70
4	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

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4 (DTS)	LASTIKMAN

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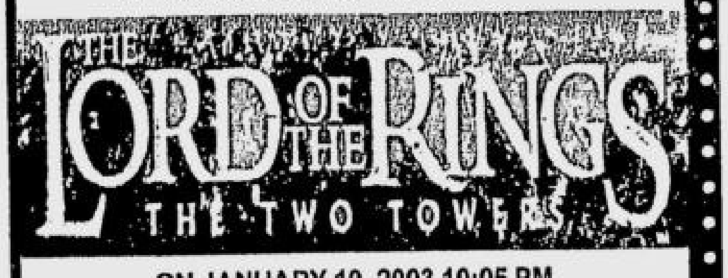
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THE TWO TOWERS

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6	LASTIKMAN
7	DEKADA '70
8	AGIMAT

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3	MANO PO
4	DEKADA '70
5	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
6	HULA MO, HULI KO
7	AGIMAT
8	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
9	LASTIKMAN
10	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

SM CITY FAIRVIEW

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4	AGIMAT
5	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
6	LASTIKMAN
7	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
8	LASTIKMAN
9	MANO PO
10	LAPU LAPU
11	LASTIKMAN
12	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

SM CITY MANILA

5239240

1	MANO PO
2	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
3	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4	LASTIKMAN
5	DEKADA '70
6	AGIMAT
7	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
8	LAPU LAPU
9	LASTIKMAN
10	HULA MO, HULI KO
11	MANO PO
12	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

SM MEGAMALL

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3	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
4	LASTIKMAN
5	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
6	LAPU LAPU
7	HULA MO, HULI KO
8	MANO PO
9	LASTIKMAN
10	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
11	DEKADA '70
12	HOME ALONE DA RIBER

SM CITY NORTH EDSA

9295452

1	HULA MO, HULI KO
2	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
3	AGIMAT
4	DEKADA '70
5	MANO PO
6	LASTIKMAN
7	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
8	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

SM SOUTHMALL

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2	DEKADA '70
3	AGIMAT
4	LASTIKMAN
5	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
6	HULA MO, HULI KO
7	MANO PO
8	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
9	LASTIKMAN
10	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

SM CITY CEBU

2313876

1	MANO PO
2	AGIMAT
3	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
4	DEKADA '70
5	LASTIKMAN
6	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
7	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
8	MANO PO

SM CITY ILOILO

3209422

1	DEKADA '70
2	CLOSED
3	HULA MO, HULI KO
4	MANO PO
5	LASTIKMAN
6	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
7	CLOSED
8	REPLI-KATE

SM CITY PAMPANGA

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1	LASTIKMAN
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4	DEKADA '70
5	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
6	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

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1	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
2	LASTIKMAN
3	AGIMAT
4	MANO PO

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1	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
2	LASTIKMAN
3	MANO PO
4	AGIMAT

SM CITY DAVAO

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1	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
2	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
3	MANO PO
4	DEKADA '70
5	LASTIKMAN
6	AGIMAT

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2	MANO PO
3	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
4	AGIMAT

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7	MANO PO

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7	LASTIKMAN
8	SPIRIT WARRIORS

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8	SPIRIT WARRIORS

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4	LASTIKMAN
5	AGIMAT
6	DEKADA '70

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3	SPIRIT WARRIORS
4	LASTIKMAN
5	DEKADA '70
6	HOME ALONG DA RIBER

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1	LASTIKMAN
2	HOME ALONG DA RIBER
3	SPIRIT WARRIORS
4	AGIMAT
5	MANO PO

Bacolod

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2	VAMPS
3	MANO PO
4	DEKADA '70
5	LASTIKMAN
6	HOME ALONG DA RIBER

Iloilo

336- 8077 - 78

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2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
3	LASTIKMAN
4	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
5	DEKADA '70
6	MANO PO

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Parliament Syndicate embarks on a musical evolution

PARLIAMENT SYNDICATE. Still popular after nine years.

SHOWS

IN 1993, a time when bands from different musical genres emerged, Parliament Syndicate was born and is still very much on the scene after nine long and solid years.

Just like any other group, things did not happen overnight for them.

Parliament Syndicate's first ever gig was at the UP Campus, dishing out covers by Tears for Fears and Huey Lewis and the News. From then on, their impact was felt.

Their big break came in 1995 when they started performing at Zu in Shangri-La Hotel. For 17 months, they jammed with some of the world's best jazz players, among them The Rippingtons, Saskia Laroo, Peter White and Joyce Cooling. It was also the year when their first recording contract came.

Under the auspices of Greenhaus Creative Concepts, Inc., Parliament Syndicate independently released their second album, "A New Day" in 2002. Its carrier single with the same title became a hit among their ardent supporters and radio listeners.

While most bands have dug deep into current trends, Parliament Syndicate chose to be dynamic. Though the group started and is recognized as one of the top acid jazz bands in the land, they have evolved into a multi-genre band. Theirs is a fusion of different music like acid jazz, R&B, dance, pop and hip-hop, maximizing the band's powerful vocals accompanied with its marvelous live horn section.

Their influences stem from the likes of Incognito and Brand New Heavies, the retro-soul of acts like Jamiroquai and the popular dance R&B of Janet Jackson and CeCe Peniston.

They swing from funky grooves, funked-up rhythms to a bevy of classic hits from the '70s to the present beats.

Comprised of eight, the members are Judith Alegarbes and Mel Fausto on vocals, Vic Oria on keyboards, Riki Gonzales on guitars, Ike Dy-liacco on saxophone and flute, Alex Fidel on drums, Ruel Cabrera on trumpets and Kim Lesaca on bass guitar.

On Jan. 16, Parliament Syndicate will mark a new day in their history as they stage their first major concert, "Parliament Syndicate: Into Something," at the Music Museum, with some of the most respected session musicians in the country.

Presenting the concert are LG Collins, Erg, Crossover 105.1 and PMX Lights and Sounds, with Nestlé Non-stop Ice Cream, Little Caesars, Club Ten Beach Resort, Flower Planet, Citylite 88.3, RX 93.1, Wave 89.1 and 103.5 K-Lite.

For ticket inquiries, call the Music Museum at 721-0635 or check out any TicketWorld outlets.

MBC concert series

LEDESMA. To hold a free concert.

POP diva Kuh Ledesma performs in a free concert at the Aliw Theater, Star City Complex, Pasay City at 9 tonight, as part of the Manila Broadcasting Company's concert series.

One of the pillars of the music industry, Kuh started her career as a member of Music and Magic back in the '80s. Since then, she has embarked on an impressive and successful singing career popularizing hits like "Till I Met You," "I Think I'm In Love" and "One More Try."

The concert is presented by Globe, Quick Chow, Pantene and Tia Maria's.

Music-trade show in Cannes to introduce local album

MORALES. Her debut album features original pop songs.

US-BASED artist promoter IRL Music Group, headed by its president John Mendola, alias "Johnny Rock" will introduce the new international album of singer Teresa Morales at the Midem 2003 music and trade show at Cannes.

The 37th Midem International Music Market in Cannes, France opens Jan. 19 and is the largest music industry show in the world.

Over 3,500 labels from 94 countries are represented with a total number of delegates in excess of 10,000.

IRL Music is back at Midem-France, now on its ninth consecutive year. Over the years, Midem has built relationships with hundreds of labels worldwide, generating numerous offers for their featured artists with a lot of success stories.

IRL Music, which specializes in introducing talents to the international music market since the early '90s, receives around 100 demo-CDs every day from hopeful artists around the world. IRL, however, immediately got interested in Teresa's Canadian demo-album featuring original pop songs written by internationally successful songwriters, among them Bryan Adams' famous guitarist Keith Scott.

Johnny Rock, in a personal e-mail to Teresa, waived the normal fees. Even as the deadline for IRL artists for the Midem 2003 was already passed, Johnny Rock decided to make an exemption and included Teresa in the roster of featured artists.

IRL is also preparing an artist development package that will help manage Teresa's career.

Johnny Rock, who will head IRL's team at the Midem 2003, has prepared promotional material on Teresa that will be distributed to established foreign record labels at Midem, with the aim of getting Teresa an international distribution deal for her new album.

IRL works closely with established artists. When 11 Hollywood stars—including Brad Pitt and Bruce Willis—released a charity album "Hollywood Goes Wild," for support of wildlife in 2001, IRL was chosen to promote the album.

Teresa Morales debuted in the Philippines in 2001 with her album "Kumusta Ka," distributed by Ivory Records.

Two of the tracks, "Kumusta Ka," a revival of Freddie Aguilar's hit, and "Muling Binuhay Mo," written for Teresa by famous composer Vehnee Saturno, made it to the top ten on the radio charts, in stiff competition with local and foreign stars. For more about Teresa, listen to samples of her new album at www.teresamorales.com.

'DEKADA '70' PREMIERE
After the premiere of Star Cinema's "Dekada '70," the stars led by Vilma Santos, producers and director of the movie had a late dinner at Azurro-Spargo at the Megastrip B of SM Megamall. Restaurant owner Sheila Romero poses with director Chito Roño (right) and the young cast of the movie (from left) Marvin Agustin, Piolo Pascual, Carlos Agassi, John Wayne Sace and Danilo Barrios. Azurro-Spargo does outside and in-house catering for movie premieres, birthdays or any occasion. The restaurant serves buffet lunch and has ample parking space, with valet.

SUSMARYOSEP... THE ORIGINAL IS BACK!
DUE TO INSISTENT DEMAND BY THE HORRIFIED PUBLIC... THE ORIGINAL JAPANESE FILM THAT STARTED THE "FEAR FEVER" IN METRO MANILA IS NOW ON ITS RETURN ENGAGEMENT AT SM MEGAMALL SM MANILA SM NORT GLORIETTA-4 GREENBELT ROBINSON GALLERIA ROBINSON ERMITA
MTRCB RATING PG-13
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Circle of Evil
"There's a video. If you see it you have to show it to someone else. After seven days... you die!

THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS

ROBINSONS CINEMAS
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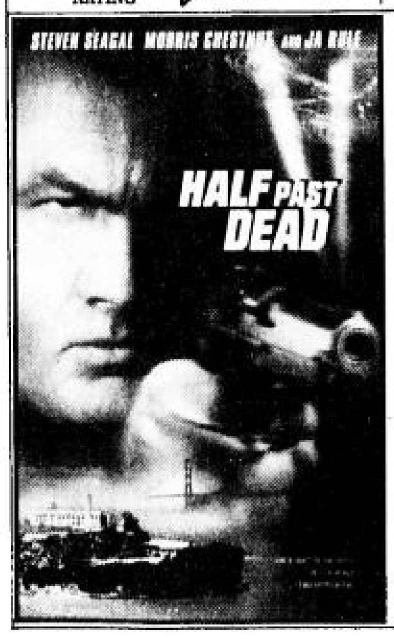
THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS
10:00 pm
January 10, 2003 (Friday)
Galleria, Metro East and Imus
Buy your Tickets in Advance!
For more information, please call:
632-9115 to 16

THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS
1
DAY TO GO
HURRY! BUY YOUR TICKETS IN ADVANCE NOW
at the Glorietta 4, Greenbelt 3 & Alabang Town Center Ticketbooth!
MTRCB Rating: General Patronage (G)
Frodo
An adventurous Hobbit who undertakes the quest to destroy the One Ring.
AYALA CINEMAS


STEVEN SEAGAL MORRIS CHESTNUT and JA RULE
HALF PAST DEAD

MTRCB RATING PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
Special New Year Presentation!
Steven Seagal back in Action
International action superstar Steven Seagal is back with a vengeance. This time he plays undercover FBI agent Sascha Petrosevitch in the brand-new non-stop, slam-bang action blockbuster from Columbia Pictures, "Half Past Dead."
The California Penal Authority has reopened Alcatraz, the most notorious prison in history. A disgruntled prison bureaucrat-turned-criminal mastermind heads a renegade commando team to infiltrate the high-tech fortress in order to force a death-row inmate to reveal the whereabouts of $200 million worth of gold.
Seagal teams with rap artist Ja Rule to rally the Alcatraz inmates to stop the invaders – before they murder the Supreme Court Justice, who is in The Rock to witness an execution.
The fast-paced, action-packed thriller also stars sexy Filipino Hollywood actress Nia Peeples as a deadly gun-firing, knife-throwing martial artist.
GRAND OPENING TOMORROW

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THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS
SCREENING SCHEDULES: 10:45, 2:15, 5:45, 9:15
FREE SEATING
Ticket Price: P100
AYALA CINEMAS
MTRCB Rating: General Patronage (G)

ADVANCE SCREENINGS
THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS
GLORIETTA 4
GREENBELT 3
ONSTAGE - GREENBELT 1
ALABANG TOWN CENTER
TONIGHT!
January 10 (Fri.)
Screening starts 10:00 PM
MTRCB Rating: General Patronage
AYALA CINEMAS

Ogie prepares for bigger things this year

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

"SOBRA!" "Galing!"

Those were the words singer-songwriter, TV host and comedian **Ogie Alcasid** used to describe 2002, which he considers a banner year in his show biz career.

"I couldn't imagine how everything really happened to me last year and how I was able to squeeze all those things that I did into 12 months," says Ogie. "But I believe everything that happened last year only prepared me for bigger things this year."

Whether in recording, concert, TV or movies, Ogie had several highlights to boast last year.

His studio album, "A Better Man," under Viva Records and his own label Giant Music, turned platinum. It spawned some of his new hit compositions like "Ikaw Sana," "Sana" and "Hanggang Ngayon," his duet with **Regine Velasquez** which became the theme of Regine's box office hit of the same title, opposite **Richard Gomez.**

The album also earned for Ogie several honors from prestigious award-giving bodies.

From Awit Awards, "A Better Man" was the album of the year and "Ikaw Sana" won for Ogie the best male recording.

From the Aliw Awards, Ogie won the best male performer plum for the third consecutive years.

In the movies, he did a box office comedy flick, "Best Man," with **Michael V.**

His TV shows, "SOP" and "Bubble Gang," also soared in the ratings last year. Ogie also won the best comedy actor trophy for "Bubble Gang" from the Star Awards for TV.

In the concert scene, 2002 was unforgettable with his major Araneta Coliseum crowd-drawer, "O.A. sa Hits," produced by Viva Entertainment. A double CD of the live concert was later released by Viva Records.

Abroad, Ogie did well-received shows in Australia and the United States.

Even in his personal life, Ogie and his wife, former beauty queen **Michelle van Eimeren,** were blessed with another daughter, **Sarah Cate,** who was born in Sydney last September. Their eldest, **Leila,** is now 6.

To start 2003, Ogie is now preparing for a Valentine concert series, "O.A. sa Puso," at Onstage in Greenbelt, Feb. 7, 8, 13, 14 and 15.

Joining him on Feb. 7 and 8 are **Kyla** and **Karylle,** while **Jaya** will be the special guest on Feb. 13, 14 and 15.

The Sex Balls, the all-male spoof of "Bubble Gang" for the popular Sex Bomb Dancers, will guest in Ogie's show on Feb. 13 and 15.

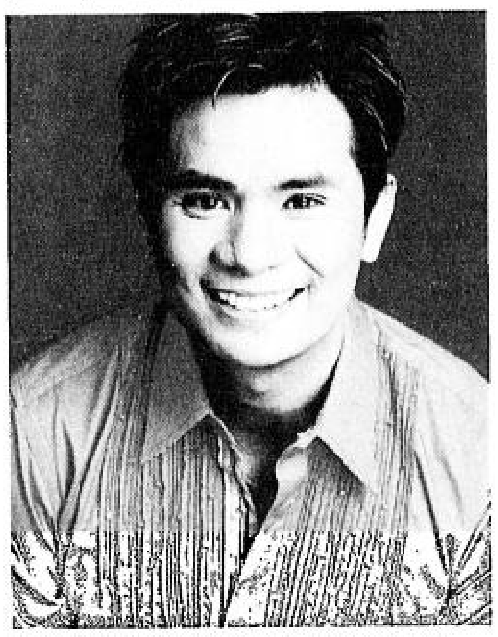
Ogie's musical director is **Archie Castillo,** who did the original arrangement for the hit ballad, "Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang." Stage director is **Louie Ignacio.**

Ogie also has an upcoming comedy flick, "A.B. Normal College," directed by **Al Tantay** for Viva Films.

"It's a screwball comedy in the tradition of 'American Pie'," Ogie shares. "After this film, I want to make romantic comedies and do roles similar to what **Ben Stiller** does."

In May, Ogie will release another studio album which will contain 15 original songs, as part of his 15th anniversary in show biz.

And come Aug. 29, he will mount the Big Dome stage anew for his 15th anniversary concert.



ALCASID. Starts the year with a concert series at Onstage in Greenbelt.

Goodbye, Patricia

WE condole with the Borromeo family with the death of **Patricia,** eldest daughter of former Binibining Pilipinas title holder, **Myrna Panlilio-Borromeo.**

Patricia's two other siblings are **Mitzi** who, like her, was once named Manila's Five Loveliest, and **RJ,** an architect who is married to Spindrift lead singer **Trina Grimalt.**

Only 31, Patricia succumbed to cancer last Wednesday morning at the De los Santos Medical Center in Quezon City. Nearly two years ago, she was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, but instead on sulking, Patricia spent her remaining years inspiring other cancer victims and survivors.

Two days before Patricia she died, a source told us Patricia was visited by her former show biz boyfriend, Richard Gomez, thus giving closure to their much talked-about romance that turned sour when they broke up in 1997 (after four years of being together).

I got to talk to Patricia in May 1998, only a month after Richard tied the knot with **Lucy Torres.** Patricia was still loveless at that time, but her face, devoid of any makeup radiated a certain glow that made me think she was peaceful and happy. She didn't even show any sign of regret with regard to her failed romance.

At that time, Patricia was the guest storyteller at the launch of the Very Important Kid Club of Hotel Inter-Continental.

Patricia was then a nursery teacher at Brent International School, which was a five-minute walk away from her house in Pasig. Patricia told me she loved being with kids. Since she graduated from college, she started teaching pre-school children.

"It's nice to be around with kids because you always feel young," Patricia said.

She was really bent on focusing on her teaching career that she even took up her master's degree in education at Ateneo de Manila University. Then she put up her own pre-school, TEA (The Early Academy) Room at Forbes Park in Makati.

Certainly, there was more to Patricia than her past romance with Richard. She was admired in the social circle not only because of her beauty which grew on you and her tall, classic features, but also because of her simple ways. She was always low-key and unassuming.

She was a favorite model of top fashion designers including **Pitoy Moreno.** She was also a sought-after ramp mannequin to model imported brands like Stefanel.

Even when she and Richard were still together, Patricia was admired by show biz people for her simplicity and her patience to sit through any winding show biz affair with Richard. She learned to live up to the fact that her boyfriend is no ordinary guy and is idolized, even fantasized by hundreds of women. It was hard enough to keep up with that.

Despite her celebrity status, Patricia remained the shy and self-effacing lady who never dreamt of being in show biz, even if she had received some offers.

"Even if it's only TV, I don't think I can do it," Patricia told me then. "You can let me face a hundred children but not adults. I really don't see myself in show biz."

Neither did Patricia aspire to be a beauty queen like her mom.

"They say a daughter is the exact opposite of her mother," Patricia said. "I guess that's true in our case. Even my sister does not want to join any beauty contest."

I always felt for Patricia every time people referred to her as Richard's ex-girlfriend. The lady had gone a long way on her own. Too bad, she didn't live long enough. But I believe Patricia lived her 31 years to the fullest because she did what she only loved to do.

Patricia was cremated at Funeraria Paz last Wednesday evening. Her ashes are now at Santuario de San Jose in Greenhills. The Borromeo family has scheduled the funeral rites on Sunday.

Wanted: Band members

INQUIRER Sports editor **Al S.Mendoza** is reviving his '60s band and renaming it Bari-Baro.

Al, who will do both vocals and rhythm guitar, is joined by **Louie Agbayani** on drums and **Caloy Rufo** on lead guitar.

The group, which will dish out retro tunes, is in need of a female frontliner, preferably in her thirties, who can sing revivals and music from the '50s to the '70s.

They are also in need of a bassist and keyboardist. Please contact Al Mendoza at the INQUIRER sports section, from 4 p.m. onwards daily. Direct line is 897-4834 or call the trunkline at 897-8808, local 314.

SHE LOVED BEING WITH KIDS. Pre-school teacher Patricia Borromeo in a storytelling session at the Inter-Con.

BETOY JOHNSON

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Regine Velasquez

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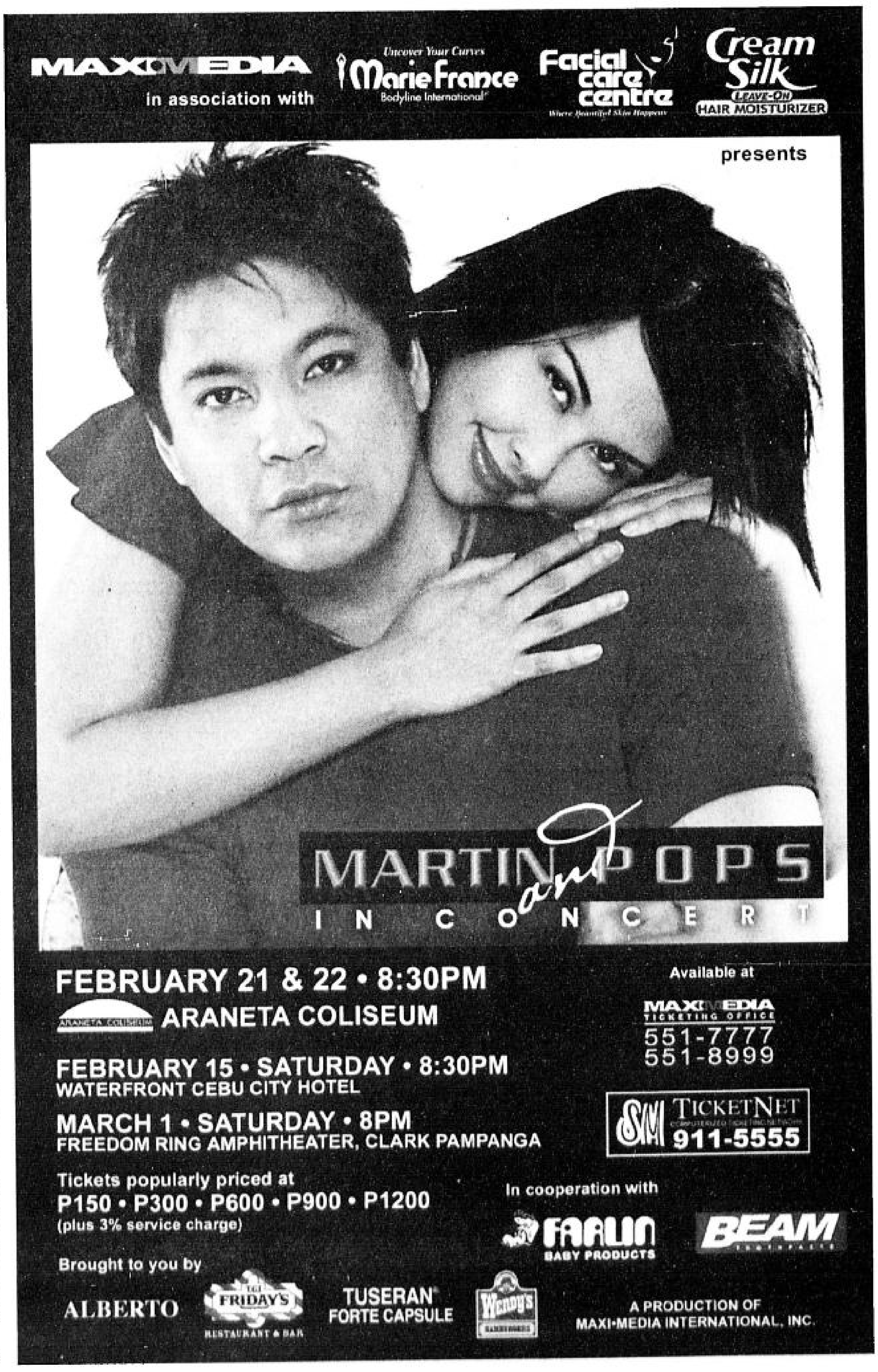

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ANNA FEGI

Shy, small-town girl becomes a diva

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE PAST year proved to be hectic for singer Anna Fegi, so that she felt she had missed out on a lot of things she used to do.

For one, she used to write songs, but with all the engagements she had last year, she didn't have time to compose anymore.

"I get to write songs only when I'm relaxed. I hardly had the time to loosen up last year," said Anna, who ironically looked more radiant than ever, during a media conference Tuesday at the Hard Rock Café.

"I miss the time when I would just sit in one corner and write on my journal," the singer shared.

Over fatigue

Anna had her hands full with TV guestings, corporate shows and performances at hip night spots all over the country. Her role as the chambermaid Magenta for Atlantis Productions' rock musical, "The Rocky Horror Show," also kept her preoccupied during the last months of 2002.

Inevitably, the very demanding schedule she had kept last year took its toll on Anna's health.

Over fatigue and a nasty bout with flu were what reportedly caused the cancellation of some of her shows, one of which was the "Amazing Nights" series where she was supposed to appear with Bituin Escalante and Radha at the NBC Tent last September.

Anna has now learned her lesson and is careful not to commit to too many shows. In fact, she said she had to beg off from some shows for January to give her singing voice a much-needed rest. Anna said she had just recuperated from fever and colds.

"But even at this point, I still don't know when to slow down," she said. "At least I'm now more conscious of the fact that I'm working too much for my own good."

However, while her busy schedule has kept Anna from growing as a songwriter, her work did wonders to her voice.

"People say my voice is a lot more powerful now. I guess it's something you get to develop from performing almost everyday," she said.

Anna's singing career has been on a steady climb. She said 2002 had been "so fast paced for me. My only wish was for 2003 to be the same."

But it appears that the singer need not wish too hard. Anna is starting the year with not one but two major shows this January.

Early years

"Anna Fegi: This Is The Moment" is the singer's first major act this year. The show, to be held Jan. 25 at the Hard Rock Café in Makati City, will feature as guest performers the Side A band, The Legatto Strings quintet and the Manouevres, with Toti Fuentes as musical director.

The concert, Anna said, would showcase songs she used to croon as an amateur contestant in her native Cebu, as a member of master composer Ryan Cayabyab's Smokey Mountain, as Calesa Bar's featured artist, a legitimate theater recruit, a band vocalist and even now as a recording and concert artist.

"The show will give me the chance to share with the audience the songs that tell a little something about how I started my career," Anna said.

First victory

Whitney Houston's "One Moment In Time" tops her repertoire. She said the song was closest to her heart not only because it gave her her first contest victory, but also because something embarrassing happened to her while singing it.

"The half slip I was wearing fell off during my number," Anna recalled. "It was too loose for me because I just borrowed it from my mother. Everyone laughed at me. I finished the song crying. But at least, I won the contest."

Songs like Ric Segreto's "Loving You," Anna's most requested tune during her band puesto days and Celine Dion's "Color of My Love," her theme song during her days with pianist Rudy Francisco at the Calesa Bar, will also be included in her repertoire.

Fitting follow-up

Anna will also sing some of the tracks from her album "Every Step of The Way" (under BMG Records Pilipinas) and a medley of Regine Velasquez songs.

"I used to sing Regine's songs whenever I join singing contests in my hometown," Anna shared.

A fitting follow-up to her Hard Rock show is Anna's first cruise performance, "The Voice, The Piano and The Sea," aboard the SuperStar Leo of Star Cruises, from Jan. 29 to Feb. 2. The cruise ship, she said, will sail to Hong Kong and China.

The dinner concert aboard SuperStar Leo will feature Anna in tandem with renowned pianist Raul Sunico and tenor Ramon Aycomo as guest.

"I'm excited about this new experience," Anna said. "I also consider this as a grand vacation."

Anna started singing professionally at 13, when she joined the pop quartet Smokey Mountain in its six-month Japan tour in 1994. She participated in the Japanese rock musical "Hair" in 1997 and had a three-month stint at the Hyatt Regency Malaysia.

Anna relocated from Cebu to Manila in 1999 and joined the band Positivity as its lead vocalist for a year.

Spring board

"But her ultimate intention was to go solo. She merely used the band as a spring board," explained Anna's manager Bibsy Carballo.

When Anna left Positivity, she performed as solo chanteuse at Hyatt's Calesa Bar and at Conway's at Shangri-La Hotel Makati.

"She had other shows on the side, mostly those that (pianist) Toti Fuentes produced and directed," said Carballo.

Two years later, Anna inked a two-album contract with BMG Pilipinas and released her debut musical outing, "Every Step of The Way," with "You and I" as carrier single.

Anna said she has no major plans for 2003 except to release her second album in March.

"I let my Miss Bibsy do all the planning because it stresses me out," Anna said. "What I want is for people to see how I've grown from a shy small-town girl to the performer I am now."

LEARNING HER LESSON. Anna Fegi vows not to commit to too many shows.

THE VOICE AND THE PIANO. Anna Fegi with pianist Raul Sunico in concert on the high seas.

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
Ali 2	AGIMAT NI LOLO
Ali 3	MANO PO
Ali 4	LASTIKMAN
Ali 5	DEKADA '70
Ali 6	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
Ali 7	HOME ALONE DA RIBER

FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS

Farmers 1	LASTIKMAN
Farmers 2	AGIMAT NI LOLO

ARANETA COLISEUM

JAN 11	ANAK LAUNCH
JAN 13 & 15	NCA 7 COCK DERBY
JAN 21, 22, & 24	WORLD SLASHER CUP 2003

ELEPHANT WORLD

JAN. 10	10 AM / 3 PM / 5 PM
JAN. 11	3 PM / 5 PM
JAN. 12	3 PM / 5 PM

THEATER
MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	TWO TIMER/ SEX FILES
ODEON	LASTIKMAN
ODEON-2	PROSTI/ HIYAS NG PARAISO
ROBEN	SPIRIT WARRIORS
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	KILABOT AT KEMBOT/ RED DIARY

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET-2	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
QUEZON-1	LASTIKMAN
REMAR	LASTIKMAN
REMAR-2	AGIMAT

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
B	HULA MO, HULI KO
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

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CINEMA-1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-2	REPLI-KATE

CAINTA RIZAL

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CINEMA-1	HULA MO, HULI KO
CINEMA-2	HOME ALONG DA RIBER
CINEMA-3	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LASTIKMAN
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	AGIMAT NI LOLO
CINEMA-6	MANO PO
CINEMA-7	SPIRIT WARRIOR 2
CINEMA-8	LAPU LAPU
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	LASTIKMAN
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MANO PO
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	AGIMAT NI LOLO
CINEMA-12	SPIRIT WARRIOR 2
CINEMA-14	HOME ALONG DA RIBER
CINEMA-15	DEKADA 70

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

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CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANCING LINES

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
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MANO PO GP 11:40,2:20,5:00, 7:40,10:20	LASTIKMAN GP 12:00, 2:25, 4:50, 7:15, 9:40	MANO PO GP 1:10,3:40, 6:20,9:00

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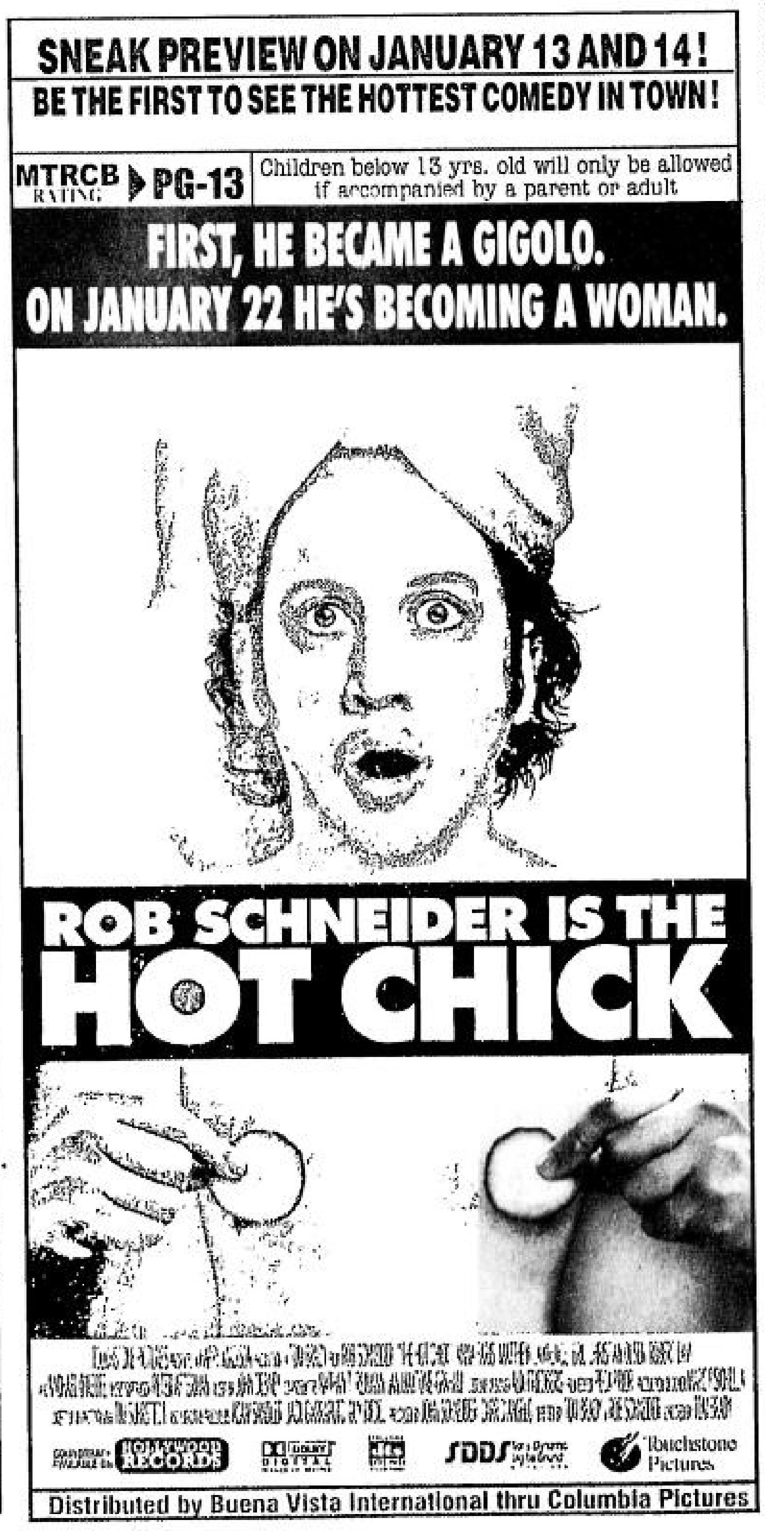

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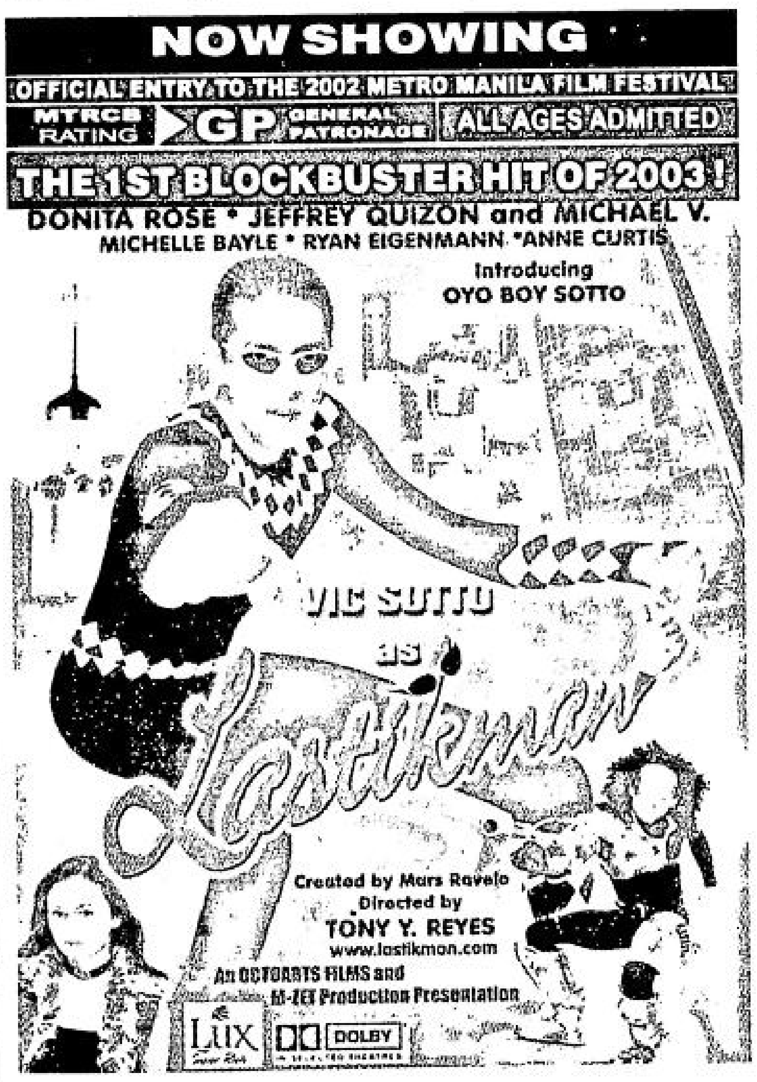

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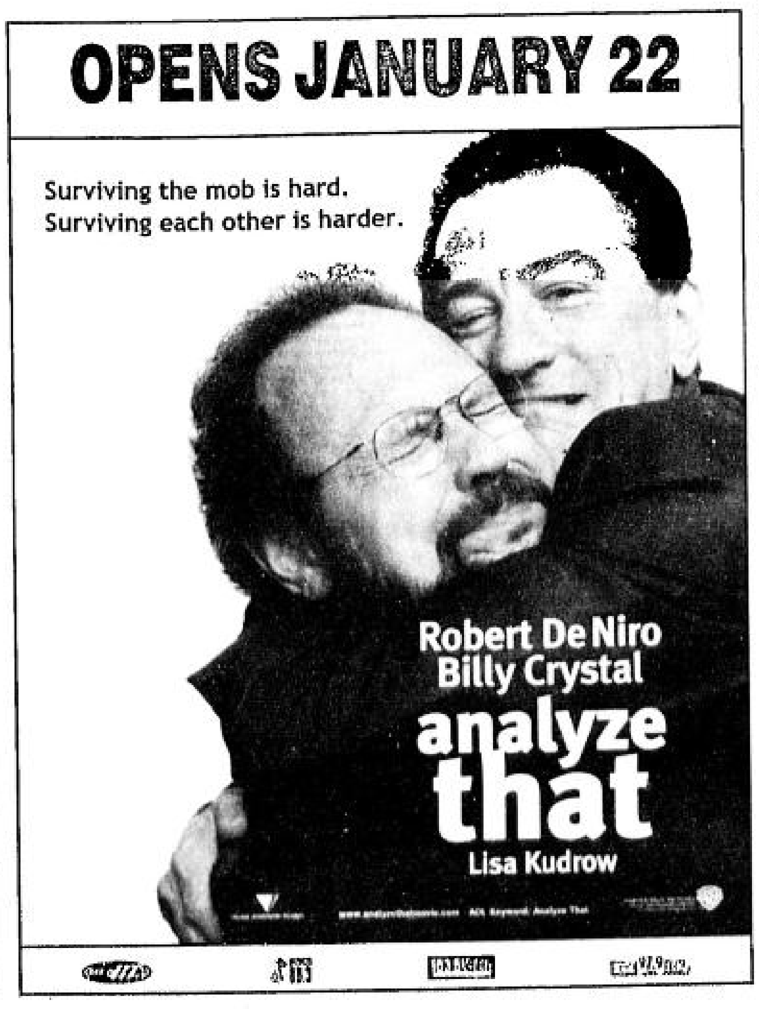

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Billy Crystal
analyze that
Lisa Kudrow

ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
Editor **Louie C. Camino**

UNFORGETTABLE HERO. The Hobbit Frodo Baggins, played by Elijah Wood.

Peter Jackson brings epic novel to the big screen

SINCE the first volume was published in 1954, J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy has had a profound effect on generations of readers, defining for many the archetypal struggle between good and evil.

Voted in worldwide polls as the "Book of the Century," it set the benchmark for the modern epic in its creation of an entirely new and thrillingly vital universe.

"Lord of the Rings" introduced an unforgettable hero, the Hobbit Frodo Baggins, caught up in a war of mythic proportions in Middle-earth, a world full of magic and lore.

JACKSON

Most of all, it celebrated the power of loyal friendship and individual courage, a power that may hold at bay even the most devastating forces of darkness.

Known for visually evoking the vibrant world of dreams—and nightmares—in such films as "Heavenly Creatures" and "The Frighteners," Peter Jackson had long felt that "Lord of the Rings" was ripe for its first complete cinematic telling, but he also knew that to do it justice would take perhaps the most ambitious production ever attempted in film history.

Half-decade

For over a half-decade, from the earliest development through the release of the first film in the trilogy, "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring," and the continuing production of the next two films, Jackson has poured his heart into every aspect of the project.

Jackson and his co-writers Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens and, on the second film, Stephen Sinclair, wanted to bring front and center Tolkien's themes of good versus evil, nature versus industry, and friendship versus the forces of corruption.

"What we are trying to do, as we adapt The Lord of the Rings into a film medium, is honor these themes, and while you can never be totally faithful to a book, especially a book over 1,000 pages, we have tried to incorporate the things that Tolkien cared about when he wrote the book, and make them the fabric of the films," says Jackson.

Robert Shaye and Michael Lynne, co-chairmen and co-chief-executive-officers of New Line and executive producers of the film, backed Jackson's vision from the beginning.

Likewise, they share his devotion to the books' themes.

"The story of 'The Two Towers' is as relevant today as it was fifty years ago," Shaye and Lynne noted.

The second film in the trilogy expands the world of Middle-earth introduced in the first film.

"In the first film, the Fellowship travels as a unit," comments Elijah Wood, who plays the Hobbit Frodo Baggins, who must bear the Ring throughout the trilogy.

"The second story involves the characters being split into pieces and each character has an individual journey. The world becomes larger, so it's a lot more interesting dramatically and visually."

Executive producer Mark Ordesky explains, "In 'The Two Towers,' the aperture of the camera opens and viewers see a lot more of Middle-earth. They see Mordor, Rohan, all of the places that have only been spoken of before.

"There are many more major speaking roles and creatures. And then there's Gollum, who can't even be defined as a creature, because he is a character with as much importance as any one of the main cast."

Adapting the epic trilogy into three films has resulted in the deployment of a logistical operation on par with an intricate and wide-reaching military campaign.

Ambitious dream

An army of artists—including digital experts, medieval weapons designers, stone sculptors, linguists, costumers, make-up artists, blacksmiths and model builders—as well as an internationally-renowned cast of actors and over 26,000 extras gathered to make the ambitious dream come true.

For a year and a half, Jackson and his devoted production team of over 2,400 filmed all over the spectacular landscapes of New Zealand, and in the time since the release of the first film in the trilogy, an army of post production and visual effects artisans have continued their work to prepare the three films for consecutive release.

Comments producer Barrie Osborne, "One of the real blessings of shooting all three movies at once is that you are able to look at each movie with a fresh eye once you've finished work on the last. To have the opportunity to do that is very rare."

One common sentiment among the cast and crew is the sense that the long and multi-faceted production has forged an unforgettable bond among them.

"It has been an amazing life experience for all of us," says Wood. "It also gave us an opportunity to become closer than any of us had ever been working on other films. I think we've made some of the best friends of our lives."

With the 2001 release of "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring," the extraordinary world of Middle-earth was introduced to audiences on movie screens around the world.

Accolades

The resulting phenomenon, from lines around city blocks all over the world to critical accolades and awards, has provided a boost to everyone involved in this colossal undertaking.

"Everyone was very deeply invested in satisfying the fans because we were fans," explains Ordesky.

The legend continues with "The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers."

"It's three movies, but it is one story," comments Wood. "People are anticipating the next chapter of what happens because it becomes much more dynamic. And much more interesting, in my opinion. There are more battles, and, of course, you've got the inclusion of Gollum, which is one of my all time favorite characters in literature."

Jackson says not all of the new characters of "The Two Towers" are played by human beings. The central film in the trilogy introduces two memorable digital characters brought to life in the Wellington, New Zealand-based studios of Weta Digital.

Collosal battle

Gollum, articulated through groundbreaking motion capture techniques using actor Andy Serkis as a guide; and Treebeard, a character that mirrors the actual trees seen every day in our environment, but who walks and talks.

The film will also stage the colossal battle at Helm's Deep, in which thousands of Uruk-hai soldiers storm the Rohan fortress, through an intricate combination of live action, miniatures and Weta Digital's proprietary Massive software, which gives each digital character a mind and will of its own.

Richard Taylor, who received two Academy Awards for his work in the first film, notes that the stakes for this film have been raised not only in terms of the story, but also in terms of design and visual effects.

"The first film has been hailed as this incredible visual epic, but that's nothing compared to what's to come."

The final film in the trilogy, "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King" is slated for release on Dec. 17, 2003.

THEODEN AND ARAGORN. Bernard Hill (left) and Virgo Mortensen.

'The Two Towers' lords it over at the tills

NOMINATED for the best picture and best director awards in the coming Golden Globes—and a strong favorite come Oscar time—"The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers" is the "lord" of the box-office again for the third time.

The first weekend of 2003 looked similar to the last weekend of last year as the top four films, led by "The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers," remained unchanged on the charts.

Just like last year, New Line rang in the New Year with an iron grip on the No. 1 spot for the third consecutive week, with megahit as "The Two Towers" grossed an estimated $25.7 million in its third frame to top the charts.

The fantasy smash has upped its 19-day gross to a whopping $261.7 million putting it 27 percent ahead of the pace of the last installment.

The first film, "The Fellowship of the Ring," registered $205.5 million at the same point.

Already outgrossing last year's "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets," "The Two Towers" ranks as the third highest-grossing film released in 2002 behind "Spiderman" ($402.7 million) and "Attack of the Clones." But "The Two Towers" is expected to surpass "Attack of the Clones" later this month.

Special Christmas gift for Rosanna Roces

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ROSANNA Roces got a very special gift last Christmas, something that she's been hoping and even praying for years—her being reunited with her younger sister, from whom she was separated when they were adopted as children by different foster families.

On "Startalk" last Dec. 28, Rosanna and her 26-year-old sister **Katherine**, talked about their dramatic reunion after something like 26 years. To their credit, they didn't use the occasion as an excuse for excessive emotional display and messy melodrama.

But it was clear that they were very happy to have found each other again after so many years. In their own words, they felt "completed." They thanked their respective foster parents for loving them and taking good care of them, but there's nothing like the belated rediscovery of a natural sibling to make people feel whole.

Ate Rosanna (she's five years Katherine's senior) doted on her younger sister, and couldn't stop embracing her. But her happiness went beyond the usual show biz display, and went much deeper.

As for Katherine, she surprised viewers not just because she looked so much like Rosanna, but also because she was very much her own person; not at all thrown off by her older sibling's celebrity. No, she isn't joining show biz, because she's more interested in psychology, the course she completed in college.

But the two sisters, now reunited, will continue seeing each other to catch up on the time they've lost. And they will intensify their search for their mother and for their eldest sister.

That search may take an even longer time, but at least they now have each other to make the continuing quest for their shared identity less difficult from here on in.

Mandark, character of the month

GIFTED scientist Mandark from "Dexter's Laboratory" is the Cartoon Network's first character of the month for 2003. Dexter's sworn enemy, Mandark has high intelligence, questionable ethics and an evil laugh. He proves that, when it comes to competition, science isn't always fair.

"Dexter's Laboratory" is about a boy genius who creates fantastic inventions in his bedroom, despite the interference of his pesky big sister, Dee Dee.

Feedback

FROM **Zinnia C. Roberto** of Makati City

"For the year 2003, I wish that producers realize that the movie audience is not what it used to be. With the hard times, higher admission prices and the rise of mall cineplexes, going to the movies is no longer cheap, so moviegoers are more selective.

"That's why producers have to be more careful about their projects, they can't get by with quickie formula movies anymore.

"In terms of movie stars' careers, I wish that **Donita Rose** will stop working in Singapore, so she can make more movies here.

"Now that her MTV stint has made her popular, this is the time for her to take advantage and concentrate on making movies with big leading men. If she works hard on her Tagalog, she can finally become a big star, after trying unsuccessfully for many years."

Focus on Piolo Pascual

THE AWARD-WINNING performance turned in by **Piolo Pascual** in "Dekada '70" has enhanced his cachet as a young dramatic actor. This should prompt Star Cinema to conceptualize film projects for him that go beyond the for-the-fans limits of his past co-starrers with **Judy Ann Santos.**

Piolo gamely acts in movies like those, but his true thespic persona comes through in challenging dramatic projects. If probably handled, they can do just as well at the box office as his light romances. Beside, he isn't getting any younger, so he really has to get his dramatic act together.

Movies on TV

FILMS on the HBO channel: Friday, Jan. 10 at 6:30 a.m., "Mask" at 12:35 a.m., "National Lampoon's European Vacation." Saturday, Jan. 11 at 2:30 p.m., "Chiken Run."

Sunday, Jan. 12 at 9:45 a.m., "Radioland Murders." 1 p.m., "Interview with the Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles." 4:30 p.m., "Tea with Mussolini." 3 a.m., "Little Women."

On the Cinemax channel: Friday, Jan. 10 at 2:15 p.m., "The War of the Worlds." 3:45 p.m., "Cinema Secrets: Cresture Comfort." 9 p.m., "Hamburger Hill."

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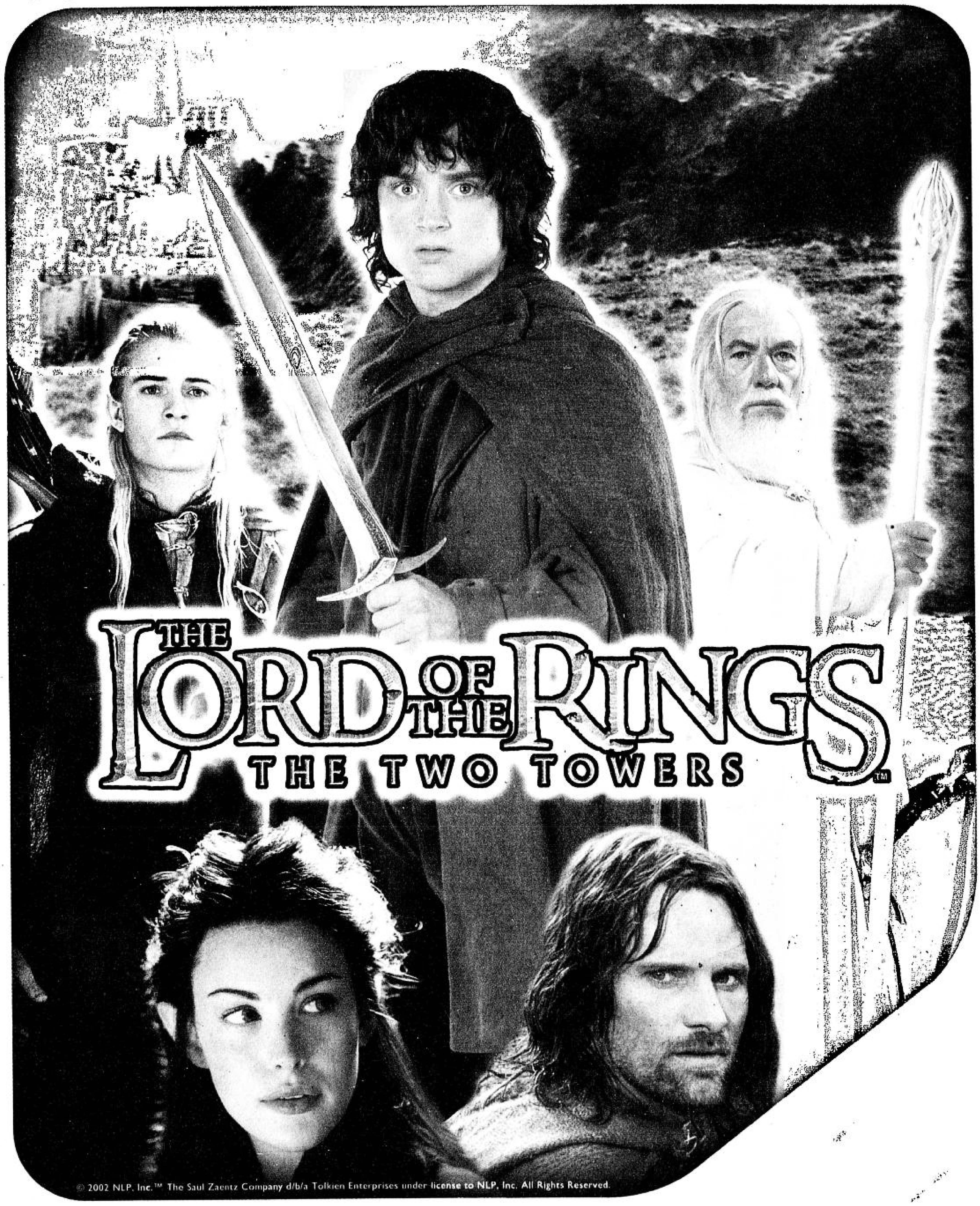
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1ST EMERGING MARKET DEAL FOR '03

RP raises $500M from bond sale

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT raised $500 million in a global bond issue lead-managed by Credit Suisse First Boston, JP Morgan and Morgan Stanley, the first emerging market sovereign transaction of 2003.

The bond float, which was a reopening of an existing dollar bond maturing in 2013, is a key component of the government's strategy to plug a gaping budget deficit, which has been hit by weak revenue collection.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the Philippines was happy with the outcome of the bond deal "as it came under a highly speculative environment."

"Having been two times oversubscribed with an order book of $1 billion, the deal speaks well of the Republic's continued ability to draw global investor interest to our sovereign issues," he said in a statement.

The bond sale comes as the Philippines looks to meet 2003 financing requirements estimated at around P202 billion, or 4.7 percent of gross domestic product.

The sale follows a flap over the credibility of the country's trade surplus data.

Earlier this week, ratings agency Moody's Investors Service said the Philippines had been underreporting imports of electronic components through tax-free zones, casting doubts about the country's trade surplus.

Officials admitted the trade surplus might have been inflated in recent years, but said the adjustments would not dent the nation's overall balance of payments.

The bonds sold at a price of 96.75 percent with a yield of 9.509 percent. The spread, or the premium investors demand to compensate for risk, was 553 basis points over comparable US treasuries, 7 basis points wider than existing 2013 bonds.

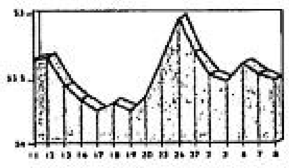
Forty-three percent of the bond's buyers came from the United States, while 35 percent of the buyers were from Asia and 22 percent from Europe.

Camacho said the new bond deal together with the proceeds of a similar borrowing in November gave the government $1 billion, leaving only $1.4 billion to be raised in the coming months to finance this year's estimated budget deficit of P202 billion.

Camacho said the government would look for opportunities to issue bonds in the Japanese and European markets to widen its fund-raising options. *With Inquirer wire reports*

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



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P 53.595 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 9, 2003

¥ 118.84 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 9, 2003

GOLD: $353 / 353.50

per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 9, 2003

Shares fall 0.49%

SHARE prices closed 0.49 percent lower yesterday in a correction after recent gains, dealers said.

"There was some correction in the property and banking sectors," said Harry Liu, president of Summit Securities. "The US market is also down."

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index fell 5.11 points to 1,035.31.

"We were up for the last four days so there's profit-taking," said Gomer Tan of Regina Capital Development Corp. "This is technical correction as investors are waiting for what the President will be saying during her policy speech for guidance in tomorrow's trade."

The market had gained 3.2 percent in the last four sessions.

President Macapagal-Arroyo spoke just after the market close but gave few specific policy details.

Volume rose to 356.67 million shares worth P333.64 million from 167.07 million shares worth P329.43 million on Wednesday. Losers and gainers were in equilibrium with 23 each, and 23 unchanged issues. *AFP*

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Globalization, liberalization worse than blight

By Mei Magsino
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

(Second of a series)

SPECIAL REPORT

LIPA CITY—As the glory days were enjoyed at overstated levels, quarantine practices meant to protect the local coffee industry lagged. People, products and even diseases reached the country.

After about 150 years of getting rich over the world's addiction to caffeine, the coffee industry was hit by blight.

Known as coffee rust, or "bagombong", the virus wiped out many of Lipa's coffee trees. Until now, its origin is still unknown.

When the coffee industry recovered after World War II, the Philippines again became one of the world's top coffee producers. Since 1992, however, coffee production gradually fell, as coffee growers started replacing their coffee trees with higher value crops such as pineapple and mango.

Jose Mercado, chair of the Merlo Agricultural Corp., said globalization and the entry of imported coffee that competed with local beans forced coffee farmers to stop propagating coffee. Imported coffee from the world's top coffee exporters, such as Brazil, Vietnam and Indonesia, were sold at lower prices.

Slowly, the coffee trees were cut down.

Worse than blight

For coffee farmers, globalization seemed to be worse than the coffee rust that almost wiped out their industry.

For former Army Col. Nicetas Katigbak, who owns a 30-hectare coffee farm, the biggest in the city, reviving the Barako coffee is not practical for now. In his coffee plantation, the biggest in Lipa City, he has no Barako tree either. What he has is the Robusta variety, the coffee bean much smaller than Barako. He supplies coffee to the Nestlé factory in the city, which manufactures the instant coffee Nescafe.

Falling prices

But Katigbak is not even happy with the way the price of coffee is going.

"During the time when the price of coffee was still high, that was 1985 to 1986, I thought planting coffee would be profitable," Katigbak said, "So I started planting coffee in 1986. But then the price went down, and I decided to switch into mangoes."

In Katigbak's farm, coffee trees grow in-between mangoes.

Not practical

"I used to have about 35,000 Robusta and Exelsa coffee trees, but now there are only 20,000 left as I have cut most of the trees," Katigbak said, "It's not practical anymore to invest in the coffee business."

He said the reason he planted coffee was to revive the Robusta coffee industry.

"But when it comes to the Barako, I wasn't able to get any Barako coffee here in Lipa. That's why I have only Robusta and Exelsa in my farm," Katigbak said.

Katigbak's farm used to have a garden that cloned Robusta Coffee.

He said there used to be a group of coffee traders from Makati, and some coffee processors who initiated a move to propagate the Barako coffee in 2000, but they did not push through after Edsa 2.

No continuity

"Two years ago, the Department of Agriculture started a program to revive the coffee industry. Coffee seedlings were given out to farmers, but when the new administration took over, the project also stopped. That's the problem. There was no continuity of the program. Up to now, there is still no effort from the government to revive the coffee industry," Katigbak lamented. But he said he also sees the need to bring back the Barako.

"I'd love to plant Barako coffee. The problem now is that there is no more material for that variety," Katigbak said, "I used to be in the business of cloning Robusta in my clonal garden. Maybe I could do that with Barako."

Katigbak, who belongs to the coffee-trading families of Lipa City, recognized the ills that affected the coffee planters.

"When globalization set in, our local coffee was beaten up by the imported coffee, which is much better in quality and much cheaper," he said, "And do you know why the imported coffee has better quality and is much cheaper? That's because the farmers in other countries who grow coffee are getting government support. Ours don't. For the coffee growers, who would dare propagate Barako when there is no government support?" *(To be continued)*

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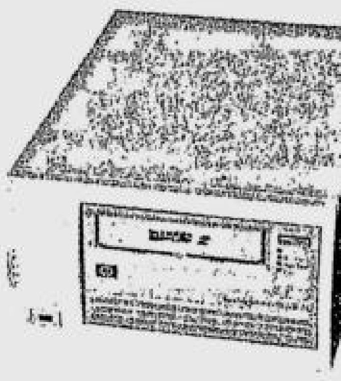

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Removal of jet fuel perks a big blow to airlines

By Abigail L. Ho

LOCAL flag carriers see the impending removal of tax perks on jet fuel importation as a big bane for the aviation industry, saying such a move will result in higher plane fares.

"It's a devastating blow to the viability of the airline industry. While we're sympathetic to the government's desire to raise funds, we can't sustain the added cost," Cebu Pacific Air vice president Peggy Vera said in an interview yesterday.

She added that the tax exemption on the airline's fuel imports was one of the things that enabled it to charge lower fares to its passengers and that the finance department's move to lift this exemption would be very detrimental to the aviation industry.

"It's going to be a mistake. It's really going to hurt us," she said.

Philippine Airlines Inc. president and chief operating officer Avelino Zapanta, on the other hand, said the flag carrier's finance people were still studying how great an effect the reimposition of the excise tax would have on its operations.

PNOC asks BSP to clear $200-M Malampaya loan

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE National Oil Co. is seeking the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' approval of a $200-million syndicated loan it plans to use to refinance the government's share in the Malampaya gas-to-power project.

PNOC president Thelmo Cunanan said the state-run firm's board was discussing the matter with the Monetary Board.

Cunanan said the PNOC's original loan that funded its participation in the Malampaya project would mature next year.

"We are trying to get new and more advantageous terms for the loan," the official said. "We want a five-year maturity (for the restructured loan)."

The maturing debt, extended by a group of banks led by Citibank NA, had a term of three years.

Cunanan said the firm wanted to start immediately with the bidding for the loan syndication as soon as the central bank clears it.

He said the PNOC had received numerous offers but he declined to name the prospective lenders.

SEC backs tighter laws to check corporate fraud

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission is backing proposals in Congress to promote corporate accountability and transparency.

Among the proposed laws that the commission is supporting are House Bill No. 5260, sponsored by Tarlac Rep. Jesli Lapus, and Senate Bill No. 2407 of Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

Both increase punishment for those found committing corporate and accounting fraud.

Lapus' bill, in particular, like the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, also seeks the creation of a board to oversee listed companies to prevent cases like the Enron Corp. scandal that hit the United States.

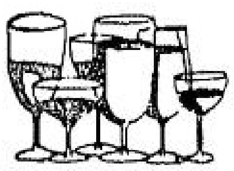
SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said the SEC itself was looking into establishing a "committee from within" to do oversight functions over listed companies.

"We welcome that (proposed legislation) because the committee's powers may be questioned without a law," Bautista said.

Both Lacson's and Lapus' bills call for chief executives and/or chief financial officers to personally vouch for the truth and fairness of their company's financial reports and disclosures under threat of punishment.

Smokin' OV Espiritu

COCKTALES



Victor C. Agustin

OCTAVIO V. Espiritu may make an ideal model for a banker in Dullsville, but underneath OV's unflappable exterior lies a sleeping slugger.

The pre-New Year socking that ex-Far East Bank colleague Vicente "Vicot" Panlilio reportedly received from his ex-Far East Bank president was not the first time that the bottled Espiritu temper had erupted.

According to a Far East Bank lore, Espiritu nearly slugged another ex-Far East banker, Wilfrido Vergara, in a hotel toilet during the wedding of Espiritu's private secretary had it not been for the timely intervention of others.

Panlilio was not as lucky as Vergara though.

According to both the pro-Espiritu and pro-Panlilio grapevine, Panlilio, who was Espiritu's chief operating officer at Far East Bank, paid an unannounced visit to Espiritu's fabulous weekend retreat at the exclusive Punta Fuego in Batangas on Dec. 29.

Panlilio went to see his former colleague and boss of three decades after hearing that Espiritu felt bad over the alleged "badmouthing" that Panlilio had supposedly been spreading against Espiritu as a result of Far East Bank's being swallowed by Bank of the Philippine Islands.

Despite the lack of appointment, Panlilio was ushered into the Espiritu home and invited for a drink.

According to the pro-Panlilio grapevine, when OV's wife left the two Far East Bank veterans to get the drinks, OV stood up and suddenly uncorked a Muhammad Ali punch on Panlilio's left eye, causing it to bleed.

Because of the nasty injury, Panlilio had to motor back to Manila to seek treatment at the Makati Medical Center.

According to the pro-Panlilio grapevine, Espiritu has subsequently written a letter of apology, a copy of which was reportedly furnished Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

It is not clear if the Espiritu apology would be enough to dissuade Panlilio from filing a contemplated criminal complaint against his ex-boss.

The slugging incident is expected to be the main cocktail talk in tonight's annual New Year reception given by the Bangko Sentral governor to his colleagues.

It is not also clear how the punching incident could affect Espiritu's chances of becoming the next central bank governor.

But, come to think of it, a central bank governor walloping fellow bankers may not be a bad idea at all.

No, no, Nanette

POLO-PLAYING billionaire playboy Albert "Bobby" Aguirre is apparently determined to bring his younger sister, Nanette, to financial ruination.

Bobby rejected mediation efforts by a federal judge in Seattle, Washington, on Tuesday on the foreclosure case he filed against Nanette, who maintains a home and a lodging facility for the elderly in a Seattle suburb.

Bobby instead wants Nanette to pay him and their late father's estate $7 million (about P375 million) in cold cash, representing the "unauthorized" $2-million "loan" and interest that Nanette received from their father before he died.

In rejecting Nanette's offer to simply offset the "loan" from the multibillion-peso inheritance that Nanette is entitled to, Bobby is treating Nanette as a creditor, instead of as a co-equal heir.

Nanette, who had wanted an outside professional to manage the Aguirre's billions, earned Bobby's enmity after she formally questioned Bobby's assumption as administrator of the Aguirre estate.

Bobby flew to Seattle accompanied by Rene Barretto and another sidekick, as did Nanette and her Seattle native husband, Cris Koruga. With the collapse of the mediation efforts, the case will now go to jury trial in March.

Bobby, who maintains about 130 horses in his polo farms in Australia, England, Parañaque, and Calatagan, Batangas, told the Seattle judge that he needed the cash from Nanette to help develop BF Homes Parañaque.

Dangerous shoals

RESIDENTSEA, the world's first luxury condominium-ship, has canceled its planned port-of-calls in Manila and Cebu.

Now cruising the Asian seas, ResidentSea gave no reason for the cancellation but Filipino crewmembers said lingering terrorist jitters amid the recent Bali bombing and the continued local Muslim attacks prompted the scuttling.

ResidentSea features multimillion-dollar condo-like cabins, whose "homeowners" share operating expenses to enjoy round-the-world cruise and stopovers at major ports and exotic destinations.

ResidentSea was featured on the front page of the New York Times when it dropped anchor in the Big Apple in early fall.

Many of the ship's staffers are Filipinos.

Heard through the grapevine

PHILIPPINE Veterans Bank has run out of money to pay the monthly pension benefits of retired military personnel.

The arrears have piled up to as long as seven months.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

SMC eyes Coke unit in Vietnam

SAN Miguel Corp. yesterday said it was negotiating with Coca-Cola Indochina Pte. Ltd., a unit of Singapore-based food and beverage giant Fraser & Neave Ltd., for the possible buyout of the latter's Coca-Cola bottling operations in Vietnam.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, SMC admitted that it was in talks with the soft drink bottler in Vietnam but noted that no agreements had been reached.

It was reported last year that SMC was preparing to launch another acquisition bid and was hoping to strike a deal that will enable it to acquire a significant stake in F&N or buy out some of the Singaporean firm's assets.

Coca-Cola Indochina is an 82.8-percent subsidiary of F&N Coca-Cola Pte. Ltd., also incorporated in Singapore, which in turn is a 75-percent subsidiary of F&N.

The F&N unit has three bottling companies in Vietnam, Coca-Cola Beverages Hanoi Ltd. in Hanoi, Coca-Cola Beverages Vietnam Ltd. in Ho Chi Minh City and Coca-Cola Non Nuoc Soft Drinks Co. Ltd. in Da Nang.

Coca Cola, which was first introduced in Vietnam, now claims control of about 65 percent of the carbonated beverage market, directly employing about 2,000 people while supporting an estimated 25,000 jobs in related industries.

F&N owns about 38 percent of Asia Pacific Breweries and 90 percent of Times Publishing in Singapore. It also has some interests in real estate.

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Moody's keeps stable RP forex rating

By Clarissa S. Batino

MOODY'S Investors Service has downgraded its outlook on the Philippines' local currency rating to negative but retained a more crucial stable outlook on the country's foreign currency rating pending results of the government's commitment to improve revenue collection.

Moody's, however, warned that while revenues have improved in recent months, "the damage done to government finances from past declines in revenue has weakened long-term fiscal prospects."

Moody's vice president and senior credit officer Thomas Byrne said in December that the government was likely to overshoot again its deficit target of P202 billion this year unless dramatic improvements happen in revenue collection.

Last year, the government revised its deficit target to P223 billion after exceeding its original target of P130 billion as early as July. Preliminary numbers showed that the 2002 fiscal gap would reach P210 billion.

In evaluating the results of the December review, Moody's rating committee noted that "fiscal indicators such as ratios of interest payments to revenue and government debt to revenue place the Philippines in a relatively unfavorable position for its rating level."

"The status of the foreign currency rating will depend on the ability of the Philippines to maintain the relative strength of its external payments position," said Moody's in a statement while stressing that even with the expected revision in the trade balance, the current account remained in a "relatively sound position in relation to near- and long-term debt service obligations."

The government's cost of foreign borrowing moved by less than five basis points but local borrowings went up by about 10 basis points in reaction to the Moody's report

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(As of Thursday, January 9, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	15,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	35.5	36	35.5	35.5	3,709,900
Citystate Savings Bank	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	28.5	28.5	28	28	150,700
First E-Bank Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	110,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31	30.5	30.5	91,600
Philippine National Bank	26	26	26	26	6,800
Security Bank Corp.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	20,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	300
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1225	1245	1225	1245	1,240
PCI Leasing & Fin., Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	410,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	920	920	920	920	650
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	12	12	12	12	10,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1,700,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.027	2,000,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.015	0.016	0.015	0.016	600,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	295	295	292.5	292.5	27,370
Ivantage Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	210,000
Philweb Corp.	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.011	54,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	8.6	9.1	8.6	9.1	408,000
Manila Electric Co. B	10.5	11.5	10.5	11.5	4,777,100
Petron Corp.	1.54	1.56	1.54	1.54	588,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.4	1.42	1.4	1.42	850,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.42	2.42	2.4	2.4	445,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.5	16.75	16.25	16.25	265,600
La Tondena Distillers Inc	35	35	35	35	15,100
San Miguel Corp. A	59	59	58	59	176,400
San Miguel Corp. B	65.5	65.5	65	65.5	171,500
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.35	567,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.32	2.32	2.3	2.3	417,000
Atn Holdings Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	10,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.14	0.15	0.135	0.15	9,630,000
Dmci Holdings Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	200,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	9.3	9.7	9.3	9.6	1,642,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	360,000
Ionics Inc.	0.88	0.88	0.87	0.87	100,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.56	0.57	1,300,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.165	0.165	0.16	0.16	2,590,000
Music Corp.	0.1	0.105	0.1	0.105	1,000,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	900,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	50,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Pryce Corp.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	1,800,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12	12	12	12	51,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Manila Jockey Club	7	7	7	7	5,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	1.75	12.75	11.75	12	883,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	0	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	0	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	0	10	10	10	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.85	4.85	4.8	4.8	4,514,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	1500	0.15	0.15	0.15	800,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2600	0.26	0.26	0.26	40,000
Empire East Land Inc.	1250	0.125	0.125	0.125	300,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	8900	0.89	0.89	0.89	850,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	150,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	24,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	4.95	5	4.9	4.9	7,386,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	110,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	200,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.225	0.22	0.225	3,100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.225	0.235	0.225	0.235	910,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	1,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	500,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	250,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.01	0.01	0.009	0.009	9,900,000
Interport Res.	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	31,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	21,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	26,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	44,000,000
South China Resources Inc	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	4,518,190	143,153,475.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	88,302,570	129,961,445.00
PRO	14,064,000	59,289,500.00
Mining	115,960,000	1,696,650.00
OIL	132,000,000	354,900.00
GRAND TOTALS :	354,844,760	334,455,970.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	379.37	DOWN 3.51
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,475.95	DOWN 2.56
PRO	434.40	DOWN 5.98
Mining	1,328.44	UP 72.04
OIL	1.06	DOWN 0.01
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	628.16	DOWN 1.33
Composite	1,035.31	DOWN 5.11

NO. OF ADVANCES: 23, NO. OF DECLINES: 23, NO. OF UNCHANGED: 23, NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 69, NO. OF TRADES: 1 646

CURRENCIES

Jan. 9, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.952290	1.000000	53.505000
Japan	Yen	0.008000	0.008401	0.449500
United Kingdom	Pound	1.536520	1.613500	86.330300
Hongkong	Dollar	0.122100	0.128217	6.860300
Switzerland	Franc	0.686484	0.720877	38.570500
Canada	Dollar	0.610443	0.641026	34.298100
Singapore	Dollar	0.548713	0.576203	30.829700
Australia	Dollar	0.546508	0.573888	30.705900
Bahrain	Dinar	2.526103	2.652661	141.930600
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.253938	0.266660	14.267600
Brunei	Dollar	0.544197	0.571461	30.576000
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000107	0.000112	0.006000
Thailand	Baht	0.022297	0.023414	1.252800
UAE	Dirham	0.259282	0.272272	14.567900
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.050100	56.185600
ArgentinaPeso	0.289450	0.303951	16.262900	
Brazil	Real	0.288398	0.302847	16.203800
Denmark	Kroner	0.134622	0.141367	7.563800
India	Rupee	0.019881	0.020877	1.117000
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.250636	0.263193	14.082100
Mexico	New Peso	0.091189	0.095758	5.123500
New Zealand	Dollar	0.502713	0.527899	28.245200
Norway	Kroner	0.138360	0.145292	7.773800
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016405	0.017227	0.921700
South Africa	Rand	0.110491	0.116027	6.208000
Korea	Won	0.000806	0.000846	0.045300
Sweden	Kroner	0.109990	0.115500	6.179800
Syria	Pound	0.018491	0.019417	1.038900
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.027611	0.028994	1.551300
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000614	0.000645	0.034500

DISCLOSURES

BOULEVARD Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Jan. 28 at 3 p.m. at the Grand Boulevard Hotel, Roxas Boulevard, Manila. Stockholders of record as of Dec. 23, 2002, are entitled to vote at the said meeting.

* * *

THE BOARD of **Ayala Corp.** appointed Delfin Lazaro as chief financial officer and treasurer effective Feb. 1.

* * *

INTERPHIL Laboratories Inc. purchased 5,000 of ILI at P1.90 per share and 41,000 ILIB shares at P1.90 per share on Jan. 8, in line with its share buyback program.

* * *

SM Prime Holdings purchased 1,212,000 treasury shares at a price range of P4.85 to P4.95 per share on Jan. 8.

* * *

EIB Realty Developers Inc. has terminated the services of Equitable PCI Bank as its stock and transfer agent effective Jan. 26. ***Compiled by Ray Leyesa, PDI Research***

Honda to put up distribution hub in Subic Freeport

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

HONDA Cars Philippines Inc. (HCPI) has established a distribution hub at the Subic Freeport Zone to facilitate its plan to import 400 fully assembled vehicles a month.

The move has further fanned speculation that Honda was planning to cease one of its local production lines, the City, in line with the company's program to rationalize its Asean operations with the onset of the Asean Free Trade Area wherein goods made and traded within the region would be slapped duties ranging from 0 to 5 percent.

HCPI admitted that it was seriously considering importing completely built up (CBU) units under the Afta and its decision would be hinged on the final details of the new motor vehicle development program, control of used car imports, and immediate enactment of the new excise tax law. At present, HCPI only imports the HR-V as a CBU model with the rest—City, Civic, Accord and CR-V—assembled from completely knocked down (CKD) packs at its Sta. Rosa, Laguna plant.

Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito C. Payumo said that the SBMA board has given the green light to HCPI's 50-year lease contract to put up a warehouse facility and branch office on a 5,016-square-meter lot in the Subic Bay Industrial Park, a Taiwanese-controlled estate inside the freeport.

Payumo said that SBMA was looking forward to a much larger operation by HCPI, possibly a new assembly plant.

But observers expect HCPI to streamline and not expand its local production because of the onset of a single market in Asean that would allow multinational corporations to consolidate manufacturing operations in one country instead of multiple factories to serve the entire region.

HCPI's projected import volume of 400 units a month represents 35 percent of its current monthly production of 1,133 which is still way below its production capacity. With the gloomy outlook on domestic sales, the imports were likely to displace and not expand Honda's sales.

Honda Motor Co. Ltd. of Japan had been rumored to be planning to discontinue its production of the City in the Philippines which it planned to import as a CBU from Thailand whose huge domestic market would allow for economies of scale in producing this entry-level model. HCPI officials had branded this rumors as speculative.

Listed firms seen benefiting from SPAV law

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE EXPECTED enactment of the Special Purpose Asset Vehicle bill into law today should bring good tidings to the battered local stock market, Philippine Stock Exchange president Ernest Leung said.

Leung told reporters that the PSE, which will host today's signing of the SPAV law by President Macapagal-Arroyo, would greatly benefit from this structural reform.

The SPAV law, he said, would provide tax breaks and other incentives to encourage banks and other financial institutions to get rid of their bad loans and acquired assets through special purpose asset vehicles or asset management companies.

The fact that the PSE was chosen to be the venue for the signing of the SPAV law, Leung said, indicated that the reform would benefit the larger capital market and not just the banking system.

"The SPAV law aims to address the non-performing assets (NPAs) of the banking sector. The premise here is that banks that are burdened with NPAs are not able to provide loans to accommodate business demands because of the regulations that they have to set aside a portion of their resources (for loss provisions)," Leung said.

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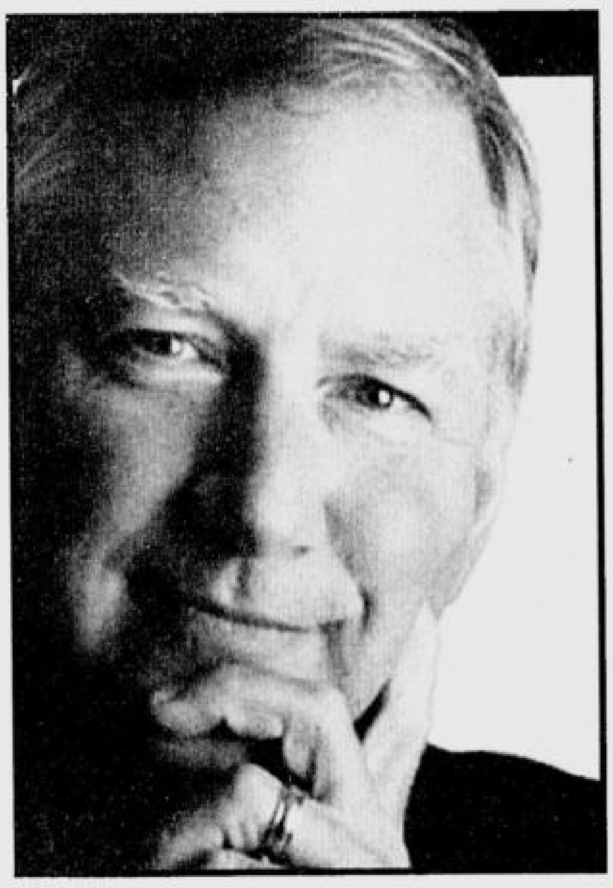

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Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

Why schools need strategic marketing

By Karen V. de Asis
Contributor

EDUCATIONAL institutions today face more challenging times.

Competition, globalization, changes in the curriculum influenced by technology and industry, a more demanding student clientele are but some of the developments that suggest an urgent need for educational institutions to have a strong marketing orientation.

Schools, if they wish to survive, need to do some drastic changes and shun the traditional belief that students and the business sector will always accept what schools produce.

Many schools today may not recognize the fact that they have come under intense scrutiny from their primary customers that include the students and the industry, the latter being the natural reservoir of graduate students.

The students and their families who pay the bill are seeking a more solid return on their educational investment. Too often, the question that lingers in the mind would be, "which school can provide me the best education with my available financial resources and personal goals?"

Likewise, the emergence of many schools across the country with quite a number under foreign religious orders or with foreign principals, have given consumers more choices. With exacting consumers and greater competition, schools need to become marketing-oriented and embrace the discipline's philosophy of concentrating on customers.

Marketing oriented

It starts from the top. The institution's president and its board of trustees must be the highest-level marketing advocates. With leadership understanding and espousing how important it is to serve the needs of its customers, the school can offer programs and put in place policies that respond to and anticipate its market's needs and wants.

Likewise, it becomes easy for all the institution's departments to think customer. All things being equal, a school that is customer-centric is likely to attract and retain students and donors than one where faculty and staff are cold and indifferent.

Create a brand vision. The onset of competition has stressed the need for schools to create a clear brand vision or identity in the minds of the student market and the business sector.

Much of business complains about the shortage of quality that fit the personnel requirements of the industry. Perhaps, this may be because majority of companies source only from the country's perceived select prestigious schools.

Not surprisingly, these schools must have over time invested in creating a strong identity in the minds of the business sector. Creating a brand vision is a step in owning a position in the minds of one's target market. The brand vision must be responsive and meaningful to the customer market as it is deliverable by the educational institution.

This can happen if the vision is grounded on qualities and values present in the organization. With a clear brand vision, a school can focus its resources and activities on what it can do best. This becomes the basis for a distinctive positioning in the minds of its target market. A school driven by wisdom is quick to realize that it cannot offer all programs and be the best school for all students.

Understand your customers. A clearly defined brand vision helps the school identify its customers. With an established target market, the school can use marketing research tools to create a dialogue with the representative consumer and in the process use the findings to develop a new or improved curriculum and programs that are creative, distinctive and at the same time responsive to the needs of the target market.

Build your school's image. Schools have traditionally taken a conservative stance when it comes to image-building activities. Its effort in the area of generating public awareness is limited to a few admission ads or obscure publicity on a memorandum of agreement (MOA) or contract signing activity. Unknown to the general public, within schools and universities are a multitude of newsworthy events.

Faculty, insightful lectures behind professorial chairs, meritorious assignment of administrative chairs, book launches, grounded and empirical research studies, etc. are but some of the events that can lend intuitive value to media publication pages and credibility to a school's brand vision and identity.

Unfortunately, most of these events are kept within the academic community. Notable too, is that very few local schools have embarked on a thematic image-building campaign much less sustain one.

Through marketing communications, creating awareness among the target market is one of the more important ways to gain the confidence of the present and future market. Establishing a distinct positioning in the minds of consumers can only be achieved through effective use of marketing communications tools.

Establish a permanent relationship. A school's relationship with its students should not end on graduation day. Your graduates are your best advocates. Maintaining contact with them is your best and most cost-effective investment ever. Today's technology has made it easier to develop a loyalty program.

A well-maintained, updated database allows a school to keep tabs with a graduate on special occasions like birthdays, Christmas and other momentous events. Recognize the endless possibilities that a good loyalty program can bring the school.

Marketing is an investment. One of the greatest barriers to developing a marketing orientation in a school environment is the perception that marketing is expensive. This should be qualified.

Marketing may not be cheap but in today's time, it is necessary. The good news is, there are much more marketing options today than in the past. Moreover, alternatives like direct marketing, e-mail broadcast, mounting special events, etc. provide a much more efficient way to get to your customer market.

(The writer is a professor of marketing management and brand management at the De La Salle Professional School's Graduate School of Business with email address at kdeasis@skyinet.net).

Network out to prove good shows will sell

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

GMA Network Inc. chair, president and CEO Felipe L. Gozon declares that after arming Channel 7 with the right arsenal to fight well in the ratings game, he will prove that quality shows can rate too and make revenues.

Gozon took exception to the report Business Friday ran where it was stated that the network gives prime importance to the bottom line over quality of the shows.

"I do not recall having made those statements attributed to me. I may have made certain statements I allegedly made to you during our interview at the Manila Peninsula some six months ago in a different context which may have led you to believe that I effectively or substantially made those statements.

"While making profit is very important to GMA-7 like in any other business, that is not the 'be all' and 'end all' to us. In other words, there is a limit to what we will do for ratings and revenues," Gozon states in a letter to the INQUIRER.

In the interview conducted by the INQUIRER with the GMA head six months ago, we had asked him if the network was going to produce better and value-ridden shows.

Gozon then replied that the focus of GMA will be soaps and sitcoms; that the bottom line was important; and that many quality shows do not make the grade.

GMA followed Channel 2's path and launched soaps. They also added comedy shows.

In a meeting with the INQUIRER last Tuesday, Gozon admits he could not recall exactly what he said during the interview but added that it may have been misinterpreted.

In his letter, he stated that, "In fact, we have continued to show some programs we consider to be 'quality' even if we are losing on them."

He says that now he is out to prove that you can produce quality shows that will rate and earn revenues.

GOZON

"We have been noticing that Filipinos are getting more and more sophisticated in their appreciation of TV programs," he writes in his letter.

In the recent meeting, however, he also admits that they still have shows that rate and earn but may not be considered quality by many.

But he cites two shows that are quality and are earning ad revenues—"Magpakailanman," and "Wish ko lang."

"With respect to the locally produced educational kiddie programs which had consistently registered very low audience ratings, we thought that we could more effectively serve the purpose of educating kids from 2 to 12 years old if such programs are replaced by educational programs that more kids will watch. We are replacing one of them with "Art is Kool," a locally produced educational kiddie program which promises to be more popular to the kids than the kiddie program it will replace."

Clothing, textile sourcing fair set

THERE was a time when the Asean became noted for its exports of textiles and garments in the world. In fact, it was in the '70s until the mid-90s that the region was ranked among the highest exporters and producers of these products in the world market. However, the forthcoming impact of globalization in 2004 and the rise of cost efficient competitor-nations have since made the challenge of producing and exporting garments and textiles more difficult.

Realizing the need to consolidate and expand intra-Asean and extra-Asean regional linkages to strengthen the growth and competitiveness of the apparel and textile industry in the region, the Confederation of the Garments Exporters of the Philippines in cooperation with the Department of Trade and Industry through the Garments and Textiles Board, launched the first-ever clothing and textile sourcing fair in Asia. The Philippines, in particular, as Congep pointed out, has a unique stake in the continued development of the region's textiles and garments industries, as it is the incoming chair-country of the Asean Federation of Textile Industries (Aftex).

Dubbed Source IT 2003, the trade fair opened yesterday and will last until tomorrow at the World Trade Center in Pasay City. It is designed to be the first one-stop apparel industry event that aims to focus on supplier-network needs.

The fair's exhibitors will feature not only apparel and textile producers but will also showcase trimmings and accessories, machinery and equipment, washing and finishing facilities, software and technology innovations and related support services.

Tips on computing and paying your real property tax

By Henry M. Tan
SGV & Co

TAX-FILES

THE NEW Year has come and so our obligation to pay real property tax (RPT).

For those who want to ensure that they are paying the right amount of RPT, below are some things you should know.

The obligation to pay RPT liabilities attaches on the first day of January. However, actual payment may be made on a quarterly basis every end of the calendar quarter or on a one-time payment basis.

Knowing the deadline for payment of RPT is not only important in avoiding penalties but also in availing of discounts. A discount of up to a maximum of 20 percent may be given in case of advance payment of RPT (i.e., payment in full rather than on installment before the specified date in a tax ordinance). Prompt payment discount (on quarterly installment payments before March 31, June 30, Sept. 30, and Dec. 31) may be given at a maximum rate of 10 percent.

Another important point to consider, especially by those acquiring or have just acquired real property, is how the real property is appraised.

Real property is appraised at its fair market value, which is the price at which a property may be sold by the seller who is not compelled to sell and bought by a buyer who is not compelled to buy.

In the case of brand new machineries, the acquisition cost is considered the fair market value. In all other cases, the machinery's fair market value is determined by dividing the remaining economic life of the machinery by its estimated economic life and multiplied by the replacement or reproduction cost. Economic life of machinery is the estimated period over which it is anticipated that a machinery or equipment may be profitably utilized. Replacement or reproduction cost is the cost that would be incurred on the basis of current prices, in acquiring an equally desirable property, on the basis of current prices with the same or closely similar materials.

For imported machineries, the acquisition cost includes freight, insurance, bank and other charges, brokerage, arrastre and handling, duties and taxes, plus cost of inland transportation, handling, and installation charges at the present site. Machineries are allowed to be depreciated at the rate of not exceeding 5 percent of its original or its replacement or reproduction cost for each year of use. However, depreciation is allowed only up to a maximum of 80 percent of the cost after which the remaining 20 percent shall be considered as its fair market value so long as the machinery is useful and in operation.

It is the duty of all real property owners or administrators to declare under oath the true value of their property, whether previously declared or undeclared, taxable or exempt, once every three years. The declaration should be made during the first half of the year (Jan. 1 to June 30).

Any person acquiring real property or making improvement thereon is required to file with the provincial, city or municipal assessor a sworn statement declaring the true value of the subject property within 60 days after the acquisition of such property or upon completion or occupancy of the improvement, whichever comes earlier. Likewise, those who transfer real properties are also required to notify the provincial, city or municipal assessor concerned within 60 days from the date of such transfer.

However, be sure to exclude from your list of declared properties real properties which are exempted from RPT. These are:

a. Real property owned by the Republic of the Philippines or any of its political subdivisions except when the beneficial use thereof has been granted, for consideration or otherwise, to a taxable person;

b. Charitable institutions, churches, parsonages or convents appurtenant thereto, mosques, nonprofit or religious cemeteries and all lands, buildings, and improvements actually, directly, and exclusively used for religious, charitable or educational purposes;

c. All machineries and equipment that are actually, directly and exclusively used by local water districts and government-owned or controlled corporations engaged in the supply and distribution of water and/or generation and transmission of electric power;

d. All real property owned by duly registered cooperatives as provided for under Republic Act No. 6939; and

e. Machinery and equipment used for pollution control and environmental protection.

Most important of all, you should know how the RPT is computed. Many of us just rely on the computations of the municipal or city assessor without knowing how the amount of RPT due was arrived at.

In the computation of RPT, the first two things to consider are the real property's classification and its assessed value. There are seven classes of real properties for purposes of assessment: residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial, mineral, timberland, and special. Real properties classified as special are those lands, buildings, and other improvements actually, directly and exclusively used for hospitals, cultural, or scientific purposes, and those owned and used by local water districts, and government-owned or controlled corporations rendering essential public services in the supply and distribution of water and/or generation and transmission of electric power.

To get the assessed value of the real property, multiply the fair market value by the assessment level. The assessment level is the percentage set by the local government unit (LGU) concerned but should not exceed the limits provided under the Local Government Code (LGC).

Assessment levels vary depending on the class of real property as determined based on their actual use. For example, residential lands have a maximum assessment level of 20 percent while commercial lands have 50 percent. Buildings used for residential purposes with a fair market value of over P10,000,000 have a maximum assessment level of 60 percent while commercial buildings of the same value have a maximum assessment level of 80 percent. A house with a fair market value of not over P175,000 has an assessment level of 0 percent thus effectively exempted from RPT.

Once the assessed value is computed, multiply the same by the basic RPT rate. The basic rate may vary between provinces, cities and municipalities within Metro Manila but should not exceed one percent in the case of provinces and 2 percent in the case of cities and municipalities. An additional RPT may also be collected by the concerned LGU through special levies.

These are the one percent special levy for purposes of the Special Education Fund (SEF) and the 5 percent additional tax in the case of idle lands. Other special levies may also be imposed by the LGU concerned. The total of the basic RPT due and the special levies represent the amount of RPT payable for the year.

The next time you go to the city or municipal hall to pay your RPT, it is best that you know how much you have to pay and how it is computed.

Ensure that you are paying only what the law requires you to pay to avoid penalties or overpayment. There is no better way to pay your taxes than the correct way.

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HOUSEHOLD

LIPAT BAHAY

LBahay7433225

LIPAT BAHAY 535-2064

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

COMML/RESDL

VARIOUS AREAS

400m²@10K St. West Kamias QC; H&L@55 Villa Verde Homes, Novaliches QC 240m² bung. CONDO@Ramirez St. Cubao QC. Call 0918-9248321 / 9220868 Tess

HOUSE & LOT

MAKATI

Magallanes Vill. 852-6918 DIRECT BUYERS ONLY

MANILA

NR LA SALLE TAFT Twnhse/3stry/3br/3tb/grge P3.230M 8903461 loc 34

QUEZON CITY

•KAMIAS• 9210255/9219967

RUSH SALE HOUSE & LOT FURN W/CMP GUARD 9369285 0919-6166868 / 4528688

•UP VILL• 9219967/9210255

RIZAL

Bentley Park Subd LA108 FA100 3br2tb • 09178174547

Safe of Flood and Faultline
NR ORTIGAS EXT
Overlooking w/view New 3BR MAIDS 2C'PORT 1½Storey Lot:150m² HS:131m² 9408240

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

1.6M C5 Nr The Fort
12T/mo. or 3Yrs No Int. or 10% D.P. LIPAT AGAD 3-5BR 15min Fr Mktl 0917-8169849

Ayala nr Airport 786T
10% DP P9T/MO studio - 3BR 20 mins fr Makati / Alabang Across SM Sucat 0917-8313226

MANDALUYONG

Studio Condo F/F Wack2 Twin Twrs owner lvng wil negotiate Call 366-8146 • 0916-4531357 Vicky & Art

QUEZON CITY

Cubao Condo P1.4M9132224

RushIFernandina 88 100sqm 5MNeg 3br 2tb 0916-7069277

VARIED AREAS

★ AYALA Projects ★
• AYALA HILLSIDE (Q.C.)
Subdivision lots w/in golf course
• ONE ROXAS TRIANGLE
RFO. 5 YRS w/o interest
• ONE LEGAZPI PARK
Near Greenbelt & Glorietta
• AYALA GREENFIELD
Free Golf Share per Lot!
• AYALA WESTGROVE
As low as 16T monthly
AYALA LAND SALES INC.
Pls. Call AGNES
0917-8435382 ★ 0917-8435355

LOT

MARIKINA

Near Roosevelt College 206sqm T9330092

QUEZON CITY

Coml site alng Comnwealth nr Fairview 1140m² 951-4536

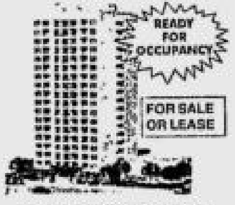
G'meadows Lot 0917-2482024

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE

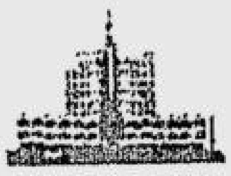
QUEZON CITY

One BEATRIZ Tower
1st Class COMM.-OFFICE RES'L CONDO
AURORA /LAUAN ST., PROJ. 3, Q.C.



NEAR ATENEO • UP • MIRIAM • KOSTKA • PSBA • NCBA
1st CLASS AMENITIES
R-Top S. Pool, Gym, Sauna & Etc.
W/ X'LENT VIEW 360°
MOVE-IN FOR
ONLY 10% DP
TO SEE... IS TO BELIEVE
MASTER C RE-DE, INC.
TEL# 913-5223/921-4883 922-4464/913-7632

READY FOR OCCUPANCY



EMERALD TWR
CORTUAZON & J.P. RIZAL ST. PROJ. 4 QUEZON CITY
NEAR U.P. • ATENEO MIRIAM COLLEGE
OFF. / RES'L. CONDO
SALE OR LEASE TO OWN
P1.3M-UP EASY TERMS
ONLY 100T TO MOVE IN
437-1549 • 421-3105
We are open from
8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

OTHER PROVINCIAL

✣IBA, ZAMBALES 10has 45M nr hway titled 0919-2221766

✣IBA, ZAMBALES 10has 40M 500meters nr beach 09192221766

✣ZAMBALES 18has 10M 100 mango trees 0919-2221766

FARM/FISHPEN/ RAWLANDS

✣ZAMBALES 17has 1600mango trees 26M DBO 0919-2221766

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

MAKATI

Magalanes HOUSE w/Pool 4br Den 2car Grge 724-2727

MANILA

967-A Dolores St Malate P10T T#5248325

MANDALUYONG

5BR 2Tb H²o w/Grge 5310965

PARANAQUE

3BR 2CR 12T 5416226 DEL

QUEZON CITY

1BRTB NR U.P. 7.5T6819727

SAN JUAN

EAST GHILLS NR LASALLE 4BR 5T&B W/GRND + POOL CALL 6361398 , 02

CONDO/TWNHSE

PASIG

RIVERSIDE TOWNHOMES nr Ever Gotesco Pasig Liezel 4213705 / 06 ; 09178356091

QUEZON CITY

White Plains 2BR T-9115178

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

HOUSE & LOT

LAGUNA

IMAGINE BUYING A HOUSE@P3.5M WHEN IT SELLS IN THE MARKET FOR P4.5M OR MORE.

READY FOR OCCUPANCY
8 MINS FR ALABANG
LA MAREA, SN. PEDRO
Call GOLDWELL @ TELS. 5617002 ■ 8337093 8346840 ■ 8346841

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

CONDO/TWNHSE

SAN JUAN

G'HILLS 1BR 5268048

Grnhills Stu 11T 929-9835

VARIED AREAS

Condo QC / Rm Mktl Area 9210808

APARTMENT

MANILA

1BR NR P.GIL ST. 563-4007 5642878

Apt 7841746/6682108

QUEZON CITY

Cubao Lady's P3.5 9124428

FOR LEASE

For Lease:7hectares fishpond ideal for tilapia growing located at STA. RITA PAMPANGA, near national h-way P120,000/anum Contact Lolit Gonzales at 807-0013 CP#:0917-8119231

BUSINESS RENTAL

PTAMO nr BUENDIA 1st Class bldg 38/85/62/185m² 8903461 loc 34 or 19 ofc hrs

Studio Mktl Prime Mktl Ave P15T/mo T8936923/3712173

LOAN & MORTGAGE

2% w/o TAKING CAR 3677523/24

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

CTYLND 10 AYALA MKTI 30m² RON 4459529 9.9T

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE OR RENT

BAYVIEW Call Anna 4115627 /4153155 /3729670

ROCKWELL Call Tessie 4100201 / 4115627

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

MITSUBISHI

98 GSR Lancer Ltd 32T Kms 8014028 09189134068 - Ton

TOYOTA

00'Revo/DLX/440T neg4554873

•HIACE TOWNACE 9267433

OTHER CAR BRANDS

Land Cruiser Pajero Surf Trooper Safari Terrano Hi-Town Ace Delica Prado Estima MU Suzuki Canter Porter etc. A1 with warranty Streetmaster 2170 Taft Avenue nr Cartimar 8336644

BUSES/TRUCKS

ISUZU DUMP TRUCK 895-1630

WANTED IMMEDIATELY

PERSON WHO CAN FLY REMOTE CONTROLLED ITEMS. MUST HAVE EXPERIENCE WITH REMOTE CONTROLLED PLANES.

PLEASE APPLY PERSONALLY AT:
3rd FLOOR CHEMPHIL BUILDING
#851 ANTONIO ARNAIZ AVENUE, MAKATI CITY
BRING COMPREHENSIVE RESUMÉ AND (1) 2X2 PICTURE
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: EVERYDAY FROM 10-11 AM AND 2-4 PM ONLY
PLEASE LOOK FOR MS. RIZZA CARRILLO

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

WAREHOUSE/ FACTORY

FOR RENT
WAREHOUSE
701 SQ.M.
Along Eusebio Ave.Pasig City
(Near Pasig City Gen. Hosp.)
WE BUILD ACCORDING TO YOUR NEEDS IN 90 DAYS
Call Mario @ 09173875104
6715332 - 6715337

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

L3•Cars• 9273453 4538295

Starex MB100 Coaster Bus • Call 631-3496

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NEW MODEL ALL BRANDS SELFDRIVE OR WITH DRIVER MANILA 536-8822 • 303-9789 TIMOG Q.C. 426-2278 • 426-4084

★Vans Coaster Bus 440-9171

HI-ACE L300 4561218 / 9296250

UDRIVE W/DRIVER
CARS MATIC/MANUAL
HIACE REVO COSTER 4X4 ETC. 8908667 • 8908668 • 8908669 www.avalonrentacar.com

L300/Vans 578-8917 (Roger)

MARIAN CARS BRIDAL VANS CSTER 8957247/8969956

MB100 Hiace Pregio 9483535

P800/L3 9136710/4333682

REVO w/driver 9272821

STAREX MB HIACE 8276605

TOYCO-SELF DRIVE OR W/ DRIVER CAR/VAN 8006595

VAN 4 RENT 8254058 8261045

WANTED TO BUY

BUYING USED CARS 8990215

CAR LOAN

1.25% w/o Taking Car 0919-7749942

1.5 % EasyCarLoan 4000166 -67

1.5% FAST CAR LOAN 6560140

1.5% FAST CAR LOAN 3677523/24

1.5% FAST CAR LOAN 7262780

2% W/ Out Taking Car 6567685

2% w/o Taking Car 8870490/95

2% w/o Taking Car 8966633

2% w/o Taking Car 7228942/43

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3646928

PAY-OFF BANK BAL. 712-7988

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

COMPUTER

LAPTAP ACER P233MMX 18T 64MB 3GB CDROM Port T-5500555 / 0919-0516550

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

ELECTRONIC & INDUSTRIAL EQUIP

HD BLOWN SANDO BAG M/C 45-50MM SINGLE/DOUBLE DIE SANDO BAG CUTTING M/C 26" W (HONG YUENG TAIWAN) POWER PRESS 10-20 YONS AGEBTS WELCOME! TEL 291-24-25 291-2423 / 09163806687

PETS

DOG TRAINER 4528681

WANTED TO BUY

ANY ROLEX
and Other Swiss Watches Buy / Sell / Pawn / Repair Tel# 804-0484 • 834-2886

WE BUY AT HIGH PRICE
ROLEX
5646593 5897041 5633742 0917-8473744

BUYING ROLEX
Other WATCHES, BEST PRICE CASH 0917-8142309 • 7269687• 7220433 • 4123543

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

Flower Arranger, Agricultural Engineer, Boat Driver Neon Binder, Electronic Technician for Medical Equipment. Call 8432596

FEMALE

DENTIST w/Pedia Training Call 531-0914 Office Hrs.

F-ESCORT • 0916-4044479

Gym Instructress Nurses Lifeguard, Janitress, Beautician. Call 8432596.

SECRETARY W/ KNOWLEDGE IN ACCTG. & COMPUTER 9378649 / 9378651 / 4190318

MALE/FEMALE

URGENT OFC Staff/Personnel 18/45 w/w/o exp Start asap Direct Hire 4752637 MARIEL

Cook-Korean Food 4263117

HRD Stf 09167054572 Diane

OFFICE PERSN'L 09192535523 CRIZEL

SALES MANAGER must have at least 2-3 yrs exp. in direct sales & marketing in a managerial capability(cosmetics & beauty products) call Phillip 7329642/7429329/4167388

•URGENT OFC PERSONNEL 18/45 w/w/o Exp START ASAP DIRECT HIRE 9134470 Ana

WANTED IMMEDIATELY ACCOUNTANT, RESERVATIONS STAFF CALL HOLIDAY WORLD TOURS PHILS INC M2 CASA CATALINA BLDG 635 GEN MALVAR ST MALATE CALL 3060588 UP TO 94

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

CAREGIVER TRNG 5276418

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice of Loss of Certificate of Residence Issued to Mr. Timothy John Bennett by the Bureau of Immigration (PDI-Jan.10, 2003)

ASSET DISPOSAL PROJECT

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID

"AS-IS-WHERE-IS"
for the SALE of

FUEL BARGE "T-228"

DATE OF BIDDING: JANUARY 23, 2003

The National Power Corporation will receive sealed bids on an "AS-IS-WHERE-IS" basis for the sale of the items described below:

ITEM / DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	MINIMUM BID PRICE
Lot 1 - One (1) Unit, FUEL BARGE (Non-propelled), "T-228" Material of Hull : Steel Length Overall (LOA) : 82.00 meters Length between Perpendiculars (LWL) : 81.26 meters Breadth (Molded) : 25.26 meters Number of Deck : Single Gross Tonnage (Approx) : 2,610 tons Net Tonnage (Approx) : 2,591 tons Fuel Barge Capacity : 40,000 barrels Date Launched : July 17, 1993 Shipbuilder Hull No. : 63	Batangas Coal-Fired Thermal Power Plant, Calaca, Batangas	P 43,470,000.00
Lot 2 - One (1) lot, Unserviceable Heavy Equipment, consists of 3-units "Euclid" Dump Truck; 1-unit "Caterpillar" Wheel Loader; 1-unit "Hino" Dump Truck; 2-units "Terex" Payloader; 1-unit "Tadano" Crane; 1-unit "Ford" Firetruck; 2-units "Toyota" Forklift and 1-unit "HydraMac" Skidloader.	Batangas Coal Fired Thermal Power Plant, Calaca, Batangas	P 457,710.00

Interested eligible bidders may obtain bidding documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (PhP5,000.00) at the Asset Disposal Project (ADP) office, 3rd Floor, Building No. 1, National Power Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines.

Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives at 2:00 PM on January 23, 2003 at the NPC Solarium, NPC Head Office. Bids shall be accompanied by a Bid Bond of not less than ten percent (10%) of the total amount of bid. The Power Sector Asset and Liabilities Management (PSALM) Corporation has concurred with the bidding process and clearance for the disposal was duly approved.

NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any informality, and to accept such bids as may be deemed most advantageous to the Government.

Deadline for the issuance of bidding documents is on January 22, 2003. For additional information, please call Asset Disposal Project at telephone nos. 922-3970 and 921-3541 loc. 5582 (c/o Mr. William F. Bautista), or e-mail us at adp@napocor.com.ph.

(Sgd.) LEVI C. ARABELO
Acting Head, Asset Disposal Project
and Bataan Nuclear Power Plant

(PDI--Jan. 9, 10 & 11, 2003)

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

Date: January 10, 2003
World Bank Loan No.: 4446 PH

1. The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of Local Government Finance and Development and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract for the Reconstruction of Tambac Seawall. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.*
2. The Municipality of New Washington, Aklan invites sealed bids from eligible sources for the Reconstruction of Tambac Seawall- a counter farted retaining wall type structure having a length of 300 ln.m.
3. Bidding documents may be purchased from **January 10, 2003** to **February 19, 2003** at the Municipal Planning Development Council (MPDC) Office, Municipality of New Washington, Province of Aklan upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of eight thousand pesos (P8,000.00) or its equivalent in a freely-convertible currency, for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.
4. Bids shall be valid for a period of ninety (90) days after opening and must be accompanied by security of three hundred thirty thousand (P330,000.00) in a form of cash, certified check, bank guarantee or its equivalent in a convertible currency, and shall be delivered to the MPDC Office, Municipal Building, New Washington, Aklan on or before **February 19, 2003** at 10:00 a.m. at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.
5. A pre-bid conference will be held at 10:00 a.m. on **February 5, 2003** at the Mayor's Office, Municipal Building, New Washington, Aklan.
6. The Municipality of New Washington, Aklan reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to cancel the bidding process and reject all bids, at any time prior to the award of Contract.

(Sgd.) ATTY. EDMUND R. PERALTA
Municipal Mayor

(PDI - Jan 10 2003)

BAGUIO WATER DISTRICT

"WE SERVE"

INVITATION FOR ACCREDITATION/REGISTRATION

The Baguio Water District is inviting all interested and qualified suppliers, traders, manufacturers and dealers to be accredited / registered with the Baguio Water District for the year 2003 for the supply of the following:

A. Pumps and Motors
  - centrifugal booster pumps, submersible turbine pumps
  - horizontal induction motors/submersible motors (5-150 Hp), etc.
B. Pipes and pipes fittings as HDPE, Pb, GI, BI, Brass fittins, O-rings, etc.
C. Chemicals
D. Motor Controls and other electro-mechanical parts and accessories
E. Construction materials
F. Vehicle, vehicle parts, lubricants
G. Water meters
H. Office suppliers and computers

Interested parties are requested to secure the accreditation / registration documents from the Purchasing Section, BWD Office, Baguio City, upon payment of non-refundable fee of P300.00.

BWD PBAC (IN-HOUSE)

(PDI – January 10 & 11, 2003)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of extrajudicial settlement of estate be it known that on Dec. 9, 2002 the heirs of the late VICTORIA C. CRISOSTOMO who died on Aug. 30, 2002 have extrajudicially settled her estate per Doc. No. 206, Page No. 43, Book No. V, Series of 2002, of Notary Public of Las Pinas City, Arcebido M. Gervacio. (PDI-Jan. 10, 17 & 24 2003)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

EARN Fr Home P/F Time 8376068

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

B/SELL FULLY PD EDUC PLAN 780-0106 / 0917-7939632

EARN THRU PHONE 8965632

Kids Wear Consign 3738821

•TRAVEL N EARN FR. HOME• earn-and-travel.com 853-1008 • 0917-8901851

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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Water Business? Earn Million to Know How & Why Emy 8603055/09198844934

15-seater
Nissan Urvan Shuttle
2002 Model
IMMACULATE CONDITION
for only
P700,000.00
(negotiable)
For inquiries:
please call **897-8808** loc. **229**

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
Industry and Investments Building
385 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue
Makati City
Fax No. 8954024
Tel. Nos. 8976682
8901332

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of Adtex Philippines, Inc. with address at 5F, PDI Condominium, Banilad, Cebu City for registration with the Board of Investments under Book I of the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, otherwise known as Executive Order 226, as amended by Republic Act 7918, as a New ICT Service Firm in the Field of Application Software Development & Other ICT Service Firm in the Field of Pure Research and Development at a capacity of Not Applicable and with proposed plant site in 5F, PDI Condominium, Banilad, Cebu City has been officially accepted on December 18, 2002 and is currently being processed.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file his/her objection in writing and under oath, with the BOI within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) **FRANCISCO C. CHAVEZ**
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI--Jan. 10, 2003)

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of **PEOPLESUPPORT (PHILIPPINES), INC.** with office address at **29th Floor, Robinsons Summit Building, 6783 Ayala Avenue, Makati City** for registration with the Board of Investments under Book I of the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, otherwise known as E.O. 226, as Amended, as **New IT Export Service Firm in the field of IT-Enabled Services- Call Center** with project site at **same office address stated above** has been officially accepted on **December 11, 2002.**

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file his/her objection in writing under oath, with the BOI within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

Issued this 11th day of December 2002.

(Sgd.) **FRANCISCO C. CHAVEZ**
Director
Project Evaluation and
Registration Department

(PDI--Jan. 10, 2003)

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of **e-PERFORMAX CONTACT CENTERS CORP.** with office address at **2/F BPI Buendia Center, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City** for registration with the Board of Investments under Book I of the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, otherwise known as E.O. 226, as Amended, as **New IT Export Service Firm in the field of Call Center** with project site at **same office address stated above** has been officially accepted on **December 27, 2002.**

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file his/her objection in writing under oath, with the BOI within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

Issued this 27th day of December 2002.

(Sgd.) **FRANCISCO C. CHAVEZ**
Director
Project Evaluation and
Registration Department

(PDI--Jan. 10, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
City of Parañaque
Metro Manila

Office of the Treasurer

NOTICE OF AUCTION SALE

To satisfy the real estate tax delinquency of the following taxpayers, computation of which includes interest, surcharges and penalties thereon as of December 2002 and after substantially complying with the pertinent provisions of Republic Act 7160, the City Mayor through the undersigned City Treasurer, hereby gives notice to all interested parties and to the public in general that on **February 7, 2003 at 10:00 o'clock in the morning at the Legislative Session Hall Bldg.,** Parañaque City, the City Treasurer or his authorized representatives will sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash and in Philippines Currency, the real estate properties described below:

Declared Owner	Area (Sqm.)	Classification	Tax Dec. #	Location/ Year	Amount of Delinquency	Interest Due
1.) Manila Int'l. Airport Authority	71,609	Com. Lot	E016-01385	Bgy. Vitalez-1998-2002	8,056,012.50	4,640,263.20

TCT No.: 98827, 98828, 98829, 98830, 98831, 98832, 98833, 98834, 98835, 98836, 98837, 98838, 98839, 98840, 98841, 98842, 98867, 98869, 98870, 98871, 98872, 98873, 98874, 98843, 98844, 98845, 98846, 98847, 98848, 98849, 98850, 98876, 98851, 99478, 98858, 98868, 98859, 98860, 99475, 98861, 98862, 98863, 98864, 98865, 98866, 98877, 98852, 98853, 98854, 98855, 98856, 98857, 113466, 111362, 106124, 106125, 106127, 77873

	193,760	Com. Lot	E016-01387	Bgy. Vitalez-1998-2002	43,596,000.00	25,111,296.00

TCT No.: S-73727, S-73728, S-73729, S-73730, S-73731, S-73732, S-73733, S-73734, S-73735, S-73736, S-73737, S-73743, S-74344 S-74345, S-74346, S-74347, S-74348, S-74349, S-74350, S-73738, S-73739, S-73740, S-73741, S-73701, S-73702, S-73703, S-73704 S-73705, S-73706, S-73707, S-73708, S-73709, S-73710, S-73711, S-73712, S-73713, S-73714, S-73715, S-73716, S-73717, S-73718 S-73719, S-73720, S-73721, S-73722, S-73723, S-73724, S-73725, S-73726, S-78324, S-78325, S-78326, S-78327, S-73742, S-73290 S-73291, S-73292, S-73293, S-73294, S-73295, S-73296, S-73297, S-73298, S-73299, S-73300, S-73301, S-73302, S-73303, S-73304 S-73305, S-73306, S-73307, S-73308, S-73309, S-73310, S-73311, S-73312, S-73313, S-73314, S-73315, S-73316, S-73317, S-73318 S-73319, S-73320, S-73321, S-73322, S-73323, S-73324, S-73325, S-73326, S-73327, S-73328, S-73270, S-73271, S-73272, S-73287 S-73274, S-73275, S-73276, S-73277, S-73278, S-73279, S-73280, S-73281, S-73282, S-73283, S-73284, S-73285, S-73286, S-73287 S-73288, S-73289, S-73250, S-73251, S-73252, S-73253, S-73254, S-73255, S-73256, S-73257, S-73258, S-73259, S-73260, S-73261 S-73262, S-73263, S-73264, S-73265, S-73266, S-73267, S-73268, S-73269, S-73229, S-73230, S-73231, S-73232, S-73233, S-73234 S-73235, S-73236, S-73237, S-73238, S-73239, S-73240, S-73241, S-73242, S-73243, S-73244, S-73245, S-73246, S-73247, S-73248 S-73249, S-78318, S-78319, S-78320, S-78321, S-78322, S-78323, S-35428, S-40935, S-36357, S-39753, S-42726, S-36228, S-43655 S-43656, S-36964, S-36227, S-38750, S-39635, S-36755, S-36763, S-42730, S-42728, S-42999, S-43000, S-34034, S-37514, S-33512 S-42748, S-42747, S-38253, S-42731, S-36512, S-42859, S-45990, S-43169, S-36561, S-36562, S-43234, S-36563, S-38230, S-43657 S-43658, S-43659, S-36753, S-35403, S-36516, S-41801, S-35399, S-38751, S-36371, S-36362, S-36372, S-36363, S-36351, S-36364 S-36370, S-36369, S-34033, S-36127, S-39637, S-39636, S-36358, S-34732, S-34075, S-34076, S-34035, S-35728, S-38224, S-35729 S-44912, S-38192, S-35371, S-40933, S-36405, S-49202, S-44903, S-39638, S-35376, S-36354, S-35397, S-36394, S-43047, S-36711 S-43048, S-36710, S-44915, S-36226, S-42727, S-40983, S-35099, S-35372, S-39639, S-36360, S-40940, S-35406, S-41656, S-36361 S-40934, S-38191, S-38190, S-39944, S-39943, S-35783, S-35805, S-36220, S-36223, S-38162, S-38256, S-38255, S-49203, S-38189 S-38188, S-38187, S-38186, S-38185, S-42733, S-36356, S-44910, S-38184, S-44914, S-38183, S-44907, S-38182, S-35373, S-38181 S-35398, S-38180, S-44913, S-38179, S-38178, S-38177, S-44906, S-38176, S-43386, S-43385, S-43389, S-43388, S-43387, S-36513 S-36514, S-38174, S-38175, S-34631, S-34632, S-34633, S-38173, S-35401, S-44911, S-40937, S-44909, S-38172, S-35776, S-35775 S-35777, S-35778, S-35730, S-35731, S-38171, S-38170, S-38169, S-44908, S-38168, S-42729, S-38167, S-38166, S-44904, S-44905 S-38165, S-38164, S-38163, S-35402, S-44185, S-44875, S-34820, S-34821, S-34822, S-37389, S-36225, S-38193, S-39965, S-36637 S-35378, S-41913, S-39966, S-39967, S-36352, S-35400, S-40826, S-36714, S-45989, S-36703, S-34733, S-40827, S-38161, S-36393 S-36353, S-34734, S-36638, S-39968, S-36368, S-36459, S-40828, S-38254, S-40829, S-39969, S-42736, S-39970, S-36706, S-40939 S-36864, S-39971, S-36565, S-37706, S-39972, S-36367, S-36223, S-40830, S-36707, S-41914, S-40831, S-35427, S-44184, S-44183 S-36366, S-42739, S-39973, S-39974, S-39975, S-38194, S-34735, S-38195, S-39976, S-38196, S-40832, S-38197, S-40938, S-39977 S-36404, S-39978, S-40936, S-38198, S-38199, S-38200, S-38201, S-38202, S-38203, S-38160, S-38204, S-38205, S-38207, S-38208 S-38209, S-36365, S-34819, S-34818, S-33968, S-33969, S-34792, S-34791, S-35374, S-33511, S-33510, S-35375, S-35379, S-36712 S-36713, S-43082, S-36188, S-36187, S-35396, S-36754, S-36708, S-36709, S-42734, S-42735, S-36355, S-42737, S-36458,S-34336 S-34339, S-58655, S-38210, S-42732, S-33880, S-35377, S-43067, S-36542, S-34741, S-36157, S-33507, S-34160, S-36752, S-45702 S-42738, S-42725, S-42193, S-44886, S-36222, S-36200, S-78154, S-69213, S-53366

TCT No.: 90330	836	Com. Lot	E016-01396	Bgy. Vitalez-1992-2002	94,050.00	54,172.80
	25,685.6	Com. Improvement	E016-01374	Bgy. Vitalez-1992-2002	123,047,671.50	80,416,385.92
	12,508	Com. Improvement	E016-01375	Bgy. Vitalez-1992-2002	22,339,030.00	14,598,761.76
	30,000	Com. Improvement	E016-01376	Bgy. Vitalez-1992-2002	64,056,980.00	41,863,700.16
	-	Com. Machineries	E016-01377	Bgy. Vitalez-1992-2002	19,978,812.75	13,056,921.90
	-	Com. Machineries	E016-01378	Bgy. Vitalez-1992-2002	122,407,064.00	79,997,724.26
	-	Com. Machineries	E016-01379	Bgy. Vitalez-1992-2002	4,761,900.00	3,112,084.80
	-	Com. Machineries	E016-01380	Bgy. Vitalez-1992-2002	8,567,260.00	5,599,033.92
				Sub-Total	416,903,780.75	238,698,785.52
2.) D.M. Wenceslao & Associates Inc.						
TCT-100315	10,000	Commercial	E015-06716	Tambo-1998-2002	3,825,000.00	1,957,500.00
TCT-100316	10,000	Commercial	E015-06717	Tambo-1998-2002	3,825,000.00	1,957,500.00
TCT-100817	10,000	Commercial	E015-06718	Tambo-1998-2002	3,825,000.00	1,957,500.00
TCT-100818	7,720	Commercial	E015-06719	Tambo-1998-2002	2,952,900.00	1,511,190.00
TCT-104641	13,619	Commercial	E015-06720	Tambo-1998-2002	5,209,267.50	2,665,919.25
TCT-104639	10,531	Commercial	E015-06731	Tambo-1998-2002	4,028,107.50	2,061,443.25
TCT-104640	10,558	Commercial	E015-06732	Tambo-1998-2002	4,038,435.00	2,066,728.50
TCT-104643	10,573	Commercial	E015-06734	Tambo-1998-2002	4,044,172.50	2,069,664.75
TCT-101006	34,540	Commercial	E015-06735	Tambo-1998-2002	9,325,800.00	4,103,352.00
TCT-134310	39,391	Commercial	E015-06738	Tambo-1998-2002	15,067,057.50	7,710,788.25
TCT-134311	25,671	Commercial	E015-06739	Tambo-1998-2002	9,819,157.50	5,025,098.25
TCT-136258	10,000	Commercial	E015-06771	Tambo-1998-2002	1,800,000.00	576,000.00
				Sub-Total	67,759,897.50	33,662,684.25
3.) Wendel Holding Co. Inc.						
TCT-106043	53,620	Commercial	E015-06726	Tambo-1998-2002	20,513,475.00	10,498,072.50
TCT-107468	10,000	Commercial	E015-06728	Tambo-1998-2002	3,825,000.00	1,957,500.00
TCT-134308	79,384	Commercial	E015-06736	Tambo-1998-2002	30,364,380.00	15,539,418.00
				Sub-Total	28,437,030.00	13,863,805.00
4.) Manila Bay Land Holding Inc.						
TCT-95324	70,000	Commercial	E015-06715	Tambo-1999-2002	25,200,000.00	12,852,000.00
5.) Manila Bay Park Dev. Inc.						
TCT-135240	13,699	Commercial	E015-05803	Tambo-1999-2002	410,970.00	209,594.74
TCT-136449	7,154	Commercial	E015-06704	Tambo-1999-2002	214,620.00	109,456.20
TCT-136452	5,621	Commercial	E015-06707	Tambo-1999-2002	1,770,615.00	819,541.80
TCT-136454	6,868	Commercial	E015-06709	Tambo-1999-2002	2,163,420.00	1,001,354.40
TCT-136455	5,857	Commercial	E015-06710	Tambo-1999-2002	1,844,955.00	853,950.60
TCT-135242	21,567	Commercial	E015-06712	Tambo-1999-2002	7,764,120.00	3,959,701.25
TCT-135243	1,250	Commercial	E015-06713	Tambo-1999-2002	37,500.00	19,125.00
TCT-135244	1,250	Commercial	E015-06714	Tambo-1999-2002	37,500.00	19,125.00
				Sub-Total	14,243,700.00	6,991,848.99

(Sgd.) LIBERATO M. CARABEO
City Treasurer

(PDI--Jan. 3 & 10, 2003)

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NATIONAL IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION
CORDILLERA ADMINISTRATIVE REGION
Wangal, La Trinidad, Benguet
074-422-5064/6060

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Irrigation Administration, Cordillera Administrative Region hereby invites interested suppliers to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids for the Supply and Installation of 1,596 lm, 24" diameter HDPE DUAL PIPE COLORED EXCEPT Black Color, 25 mm Wall Thickness, 1.9mm Profile Thickness and Minimum of 0.10 MPA Pipe Stiffness with Smooth Inside Wall Surface, Leakage Free HDPE Coupler, for use of Butigue-Dannal CIS Extension with an Approved Budget for Contract of P6, 931,353.60.

Bid documents can be obtained by interested suppliers/bidders starting on **January 13, 2003** from the BAC Secretariat, NIA-CAR, Wangal, La Trinidad, Benguet upon payment of non-refundable fee of P1,500.00.

Eligible bidders are requested to register with the BAC Secretariat prior to attending the Pre-Bid Conference at **NIA-CAR, Wangal, La Trinidad, Benguet on January 27, 2003, 10 AM.** Only registered bidders will be allowed to submit bids. All bidders shall submit their sealed bids in the prescribed form to the BAC Secretariat not later than **2 PM on February 7, 2003.**

The opening of bids of notified eligible bidders shall be as follows:

Opening of Bids : **February 7, 2003**
Time : 2:00 PM
Place : NIA-CAR, Wangal, La Trinidad, Benguet

The NIA-CAR reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any defect or informality therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) NORMALITO B. TAMAYO
BAC Chairman

(PDI – January 10 & 17, 2003)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites all interested insurance service contractors of Life Insurance Companies and Health Maintenance Organizations to apply for eligibility and to bid for the rebidding of NFA's 2003 Group Insurance Programs as follows:

Programs	No. of Employees/Officials	Approved Budget
Group Hospitalization	4,418	P 10,760,230.00
Group Term Life	4,706	5,523,933.00
Group Accident	4,706	1,854,160.00
Executive Health Care	134	949,256.00
TOTAL		P 19,087,579.00

The schedule of bidding activities is as follows:

January 13-21, 2003	Issuance and Submission of Registration Requirements
January 23-24, 2003	Notification of Registered Bidders and Issuance of Bid Documents
January 28, 2003 (10:00 a.m.)	Pre-bidding Conference
February 12, 2003 (9:00 - 10:30 a.m.)	Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals
(10:45 a.m.)	Opening of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals

Those who were previously registered are automatically qualified to participate in the rebidding. Registration and eligibility requirements can be secured from and submitted to BAC Secretariat, ODAFA, 7th Floor Matimyas Building, 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City. Bidding documents may likewise be secured from BAC Secretariat and the same shall be issued to duly registered bidders upon payment of P2,000.00, non-refundable fee.

NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY/INFORMALITY OF THE BIDS RECEIVED AND TO ACCEPT ONLY SUCH BIDS WHICH ARE ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY.

(Sgd.) PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.
Deputy Administrator & Chairman, BAC

(PDI - Jan. 10 & 17, 2003)

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation
Energy Center, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Telephone Nos. 893-1320 loc. 5115 Fax 840-1461

INVITATION TO BID

The PNOC - Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested accredited or prequalified contractors to submit sealed bids for the project:

ANNUAL CONTRACT for VOYAGE CHARTER of LCT
EDC 02-255

Bid documents may be secured from the Contracts Administration Group (c/o I. M. CORCUERA) starting **January 10, 2003 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of FIVE HUNDRED PESOS only (P500.00).**

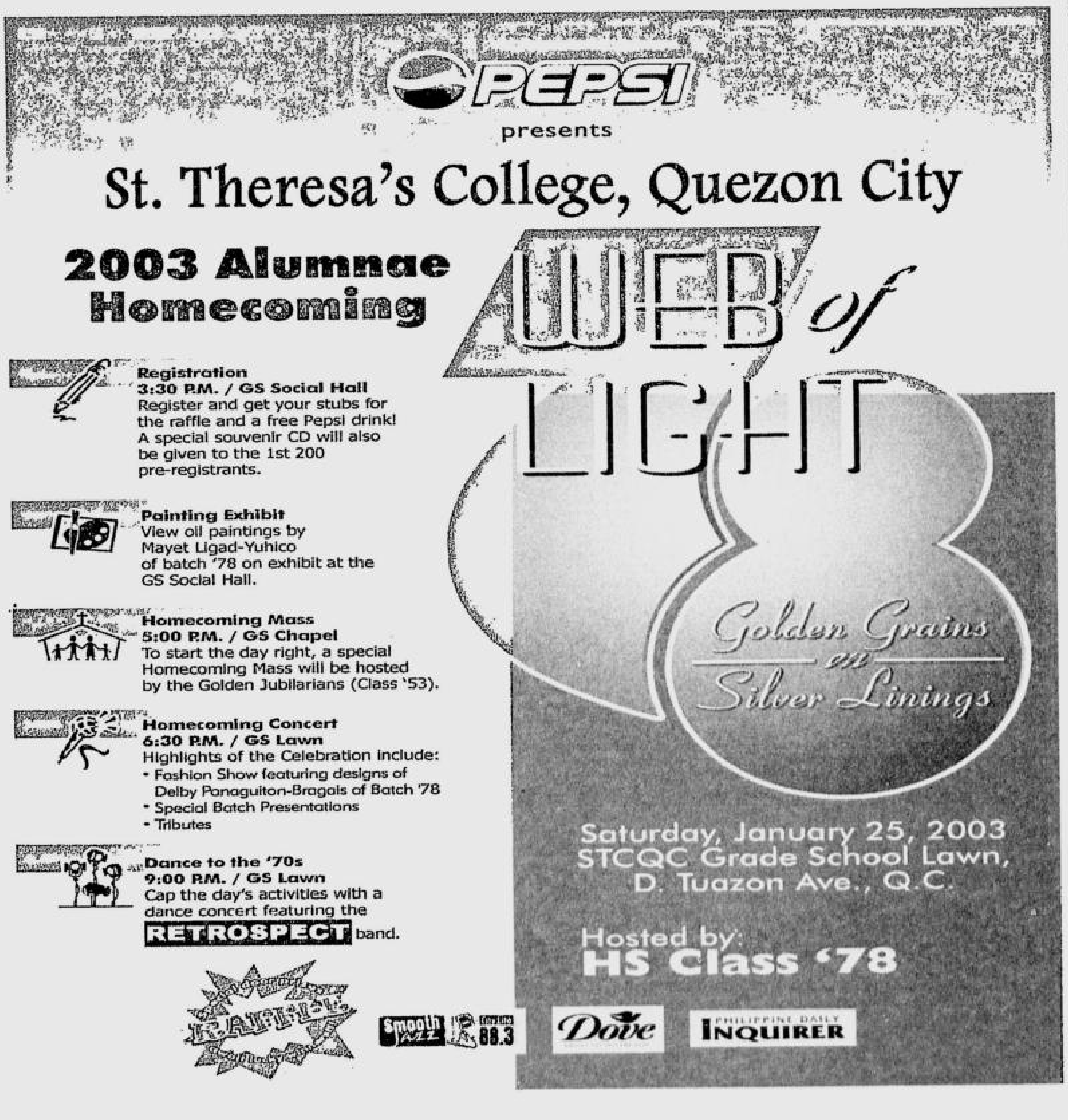
For purposes of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **January 20, 2003,** 10:00 a.m. at the above address.

Sealed bids in two (2) sets shall be received by the Contracts Administration Group at the above address not later than 2:00 p.m. of **February 11, 2003,** and then publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

(Sgd.) **ESTER R. GUERZON**
Manager, Operations
Services Division

(PDI - Jan. 10, 2003)



PEPSI presents

St. Theresa's College, Quezon City

2003 Alumnae Homecoming

WEB of LIGHT

Golden Grains on Silver Linings

Registration
3:30 P.M. / GS Social Hall
Register and get your stubs for the raffle and a free Pepsi drink! A special souvenir CD will also be given to the 1st 200 pre-registrants.

Painting Exhibit
View oil paintings by Mayet Ligad-Yuhico of batch '78 on exhibit at the GS Social Hall.

Homecoming Mass
5:00 P.M. / GS Chapel
To start the day right, a special Homecoming Mass will be hosted by the Golden Jubilarians (Class '53).

Homecoming Concert
6:30 P.M. / GS Lawn
Highlights of the Celebration include:
- Fashion Show featuring designs of Delby Panaguiton-Bragais of Batch '78
- Special Batch Presentations
- Tributes

Dance to the '70s
9:00 P.M. / GS Lawn
Cap the day's activities with a dance concert featuring the **RETROSPECT** band.

Saturday, January 25, 2003
STCQC Grade School Lawn,
D. Tuazon Ave., Q.C.

Hosted by:
HS Class '78

Kagawaran ng Katarungan

PANGASIWAAN SA PATALAAN NG MGA LUPAIN

(LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY)

Lungsod ng Quezon

September 10, 2002

LRA CIRCULAR NO. 11-2002

SUBJECT : INCREASE IN THE RATES OF FEES AND CHARGES PAYABLE TO THE CLERK OF COURT, THE SHERIFF, THE REGISTER OF DEEDS AND THE LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY AND FEES FOR CHATTEL MORTGAGES, ETC., AUTHORIZED UNDER P.D. 1529 - THE PROPERTY REGISTRATION DECREE PURSUANT TO EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 197 DATED JANUARY 13, 2000 AND DOF-DBM JOINT CIRCULAR NO. 2000-2 DATED APRIL 4, 2000. THE REVISED RATES SHALL TAKE EFFECT FIFTEEN (15) DAYS AFTER ITS LAST PUBLICATION IN TWO (2) NEWSPAPER OF GENERAL CIRCULATION.

SCHEDULE OF FEES: **SPECIAL FUND**

SEC. 111. Fees Payable - The fees payable to the Clerk of Court, the Sheriff, the Register of Deeds and the Land Registration Authority shall be as follows:

A. Fees payable to the Clerk of Court - The fees payable to the Clerks of Court or his deputies shall be as follows:

1. For filing an application for the registration of land. Fees shall be based on the assessed value of the property for the current year in accordance with the following schedule:
   a. When the value of the property does not exceed two thousand pesos:
      - For the first five hundred pesos, or fractional part thereof 45.00
      - For each additional five hundred pesos, or fractional part thereof 15.00
   b. When the value of the property is more than two thousand pesos but does not exceed ten thousand pesos:
      - For the first three thousand pesos, or fractional part thereof 105.00
      - For each additional one thousand pesos, or fractional part thereof 15.00
   c. When the value of the property is more than ten thousand pesos but does not exceed one hundred thousand pesos:
      - For the first twenty thousand pesos, or fractional part thereof 240.00
      - For each additional ten thousand pesos, or fractional part thereof 30.00
   d. When the value of the property is more than one hundred thousand pesos but does not exceed five hundred thousand pesos:
      - For the first one hundred twenty five thousand pesos, or fractional part thereof 540.00
      - For each additional twenty five thousand pesos, or fractional part thereof 60.00
   e. When the value of the property is more than five hundred thousand pesos:
      - For the first five hundred fifty thousand pesos, or fractional part thereof 1,560.00
      - For each additional fifty thousand pesos, or fractional part thereof 120.00
2. For filing a petition for review of judgment and decree, or other claim adverse to the registered owner -
   - For each petition 120.00
3. For filing a petition after the decision has become final - If it affects land decree in more than one case - 120.00
   - For each additional case 6.00

B. Fees payable to the Sheriff - The Sheriff shall collect fees for his services rendered in connection with land registration and cadastral proceedings as follows:

1. For posting notices of initial hearing of land registration cases in conspicuous places on the lands described in the notice -
   - For each parcel of land on which a copy of such notice is posted, besides travel fees 18.00
2. For posting notices of initial hearing of cadastral cases in conspicuous places on the lands included in the survey -
   - For each group of one hundred lots on which a copy of the notice is posted, besides travel fees 18.00
3. For posting one copy of a notice of initial hearing in a conspicuous place upon the municipal building of the city, municipality, or municipal district in which the land or portion thereof lies, besides travel fees - 18.00
4. For serving notices upon cadastral claimants to appear before the court, travel fees only as provided in the Rules of Court.
5. For all other services not mentioned above, the same fees including travel fees as provided in the Rules of Court for similar services.

C. Fees payable to the Register of Deeds - The Register of Deeds shall collect fees for all services rendered by him under this Decree in accordance with the following schedule:

1. Original certificate of title - For the entry of one original certificate of title and issuance of one owner's duplicate certificate:
   - For the first parcel of land described thereon 60.00
   - For each additional parcel 30.00
2. Entry fee - For each entry in the primary entry book - 30.00
3. Attachment, levy etc. - For the annotation of an attachment, levy, writ or execution, adverse claim, for each parcel of land affected thereby - 30.00
4. Lis Pendens, etc. - For the annotation of a notice of lis pendens, or of any document or order in connection therewith, for each parcel of land affected thereby - 30.00
5. Release of encumbrance - For the annotation of a release of any encumbrance, except mortgage, lease or other lien for the cancellation of which a specific fee is prescribed herein, but the total amount of fees to be collected shall not exceed the amount of fees paid for the registration of such encumbrance, for each parcel of land as released - 30.00
6. Court Order - For the annotation of an order of the court for the amendment of, or the making of a memorandum on, a certificate of title, except inclusion of buildings and improvements, or any order directing the registration of a document, or any right or interest referred to in said order, or the cancellation of a certificate of title and/or the issuance of a new one -
   - For each certificate of title on which the annotation is made, in addition to the fees prescribed under paragraphs sixteen or seventeen, as the case may be, on this subsection, if the same are also due for the registration of such document, right of interest - 60.00
7. Building - For the annotation of an order of the court for the inclusion of building and/or improvement in a certificate of title, for each certificate of title - 60.00
8. Powers of attorney, letters of administration, appointment of guardian, resolution or revocation thereof - For registering and filing a power of attorney, letters of administration of letters testamentary whether or not accompanied by a copy of the testament, certificate of allowance of a will with attested copy of the will annexed, appointment of guardian for a minor or incompetent person, appointment of receiver, trustee, or administrator, articles of incorporation of any corporation, association or partnership, or resolution of its board of directors empowering an officer or member thereof to act in behalf of the same: 120.00

   For the annotation of such papers on certificates of title when required by existing laws or regulations, for each certificates of title so annotated: 30.00

   For registering an instrument of revocation of any of the papers mentioned above - 30.00

   If annotated on the corresponding certificate of title, for each certificate of title - 18.00
9. Notice of tax lien, loss, etc. - For the annotation of a notice of tax lien of any description, notice of lost duplicate or copy of a certificate of title, order of the court declaring such duplicate or copy null and void, notice or change of address, or the cancellation of any such annotation, for each certificate of title - 30.00
10. Carry over of annotation - For transferring the memorandum of an encumbrance of any kind from one certificate of title which is cancelled to a new one in lieu thereof, for each memorandum thus transferred - 30.00
11. Annotation on additional copy of title - For any memorandum made in a standing co-owner's copy of a certificate of title after a similar memorandum has been made in the original thereof - for each certificate of title - 30.00
12. No specific fee - For any memorandum made in a certificate of title for which no specific fee is prescribed above, for each certificate of title - 30.00
13. Transfer to trustee, executor, administrator, receiver, - For the issuance of a transfer certificate of title - including its duplicate, to a trustee, executor, administrator, or receiver, or for the cancellation of such certificate of title and issuance of a new one, including its duplicate, to the qestui que trust in case of trusteeship - 60.00

    If the certificate covers more than one parcel of lot, an additional fee shall be collected for each additional parcel of lot - 30.00
14. Transfer certificate of title - For the issuance of a transfer certificate of title, including its duplicate, to a person other than those named in the next preceding paragraph, in addition to the fees hereinafter prescribed in paragraph sixteen or seventeen, as the case may be, of this subsection, if the same are also due - 60.00

    If the certificate covers more than one parcel or lot, and additional fee shall be collected for each additional parcel or lot - 30.00
15. Additional copy of title - For the issuance of a new owner's duplicate or co-owner's copy of certificate of title, or any additional duplicate or copy thereof:
    - For the first page 60.00
    - For each subsequent page 30.00
16. Registration fee - For the registration of a deed of sale, conveyance, transfer, exchange, partition, or donation: a deed of sale with pacto de retro, conditional sale, sheriff's sale at public auction, sale for non-payment of taxes, or any sale subject to redemption, or the repurchase or redemption of the property so sold; any instrument, order, judgment or decree divesting the title of the registered owner, except in favor of a trustee, executor, administrator or receiver; option to purchase or promise to sell: any mortgage, surety, bond, lease, easement, right-of-way, or other real right or lien created or constituted by virtue of a district contract or agreement, and not as an incidental condition of sale, transfer or conveyance: the assignment, enlargement, extension or novation of a mortgage or of any other real right, or a release or mortgage, termination of lease, or consolidation of ownership over a property sold with pacto de retro: where no specific fee is prescribed therefore in preceeding paragraphs, the fees shall be based on the value of the consideration in accordance with the following schedule:

VALUE OF CONSIDERATION

More than	Not Exceeding	
00.00	500.00	21.00
500.00	1,000.00	30.00
1,000.00	1,500.00	39.00
1,500.00	2,000.00	48.00
2,000.00	2,500.00	57.00
2,500.00	3,000.00	66.00
3,000.00	3,500.00	75.00
3,500.00	4,000.00	84.00
4,000.00	4,500.00	93.00
4,500.00	5,000.00	102.00
5,000.00	5,500.00	111.00
5,500.00	6,000.00	120.00
6,000.00	8,000.00	144.00
8,000.00	10,000.00	168.00
10,000.00	12,000.00	192.00
12,000.00	14,000.00	216.00
14,000.00	16,000.00	240.00
16,000.00	18,000.00	264.00
18,000.00	20,000.00	288.00
20,000.00	22,000.00	312.00
22,000.00	24,000.00	336.00
24,000.00	26,000.00	360.00
26,000.00	28,000.00	384.00
28,000.00	30,000.00	408.00
30,000.00	35,000.00	450.00
35,000.00	40,000.00	492.00
40,000.00	45,000.00	534.00
45,000.00	50,000.00	576.00
50,000.00	55,000.00	618.00
55,000.00	60,000.00	660.00
60,000.00	65,000.00	702.00
65,000.00	70,000.00	744.00
70,000.00	75,000.00	786.00
75,000.00	80,000.00	828.00
80,000.00	85,000.00	870.00
85,000.00	90,000.00	912.00
90,000.00	95,000.00	954.00
95,000.00	100,000.00	996.00
100,000.00	110,000.00	1,056.00
110,000.00	120,000.00	1,116.00
120,000.00	130,000.00	1,176.00
130,000.00	140,000.00	1,236.00
140,000.00	150,000.00	1,296.00
150,000.00	160,000.00	1,356.00
160,000.00	170,000.00	1,416.00
170,000.00	180,000.00	1,476.00
180,000.00	190,000.00	1,536.00
190,000.00	200,000.00	1,596.00
200,000.00	210,000.00	1,656.00
210,000.00	220,000.00	1,716.00
220,000.00	230,000.00	1,776.00
230,000.00	240,000.00	1,836.00
240,000.00	250,000.00	1,896.00
250,000.00	260,000.00	1,956.00
260,000.00	270,000.00	2,016.00
270,000.00	280,000.00	2,076.00
280,000.00	290,000.00	2,136.00
290,000.00	300,000.00	2,196.00
300,000.00	310,000.00	2,256.00
310,000.00	320,000.00	2,316.00
320,000.00	330,000.00	2,376.00
330,000.00	340,000.00	2,436.00
340,000.00	350,000.00	2,496.00
350,000.00	360,000.00	2,556.00
360,000.00	370,000.00	2,616.00
370,000.00	380,000.00	2,676.00
380,000.00	390,000.00	2,736.00
390,000.00	400,000.00	2,796.00
400,000.00	410,000.00	2,856.00
410,000.00	420,000.00	2,916.00
420,000.00	430,000.00	2,976.00
430,000.00	440,000.00	3,036.00
440,000.00	450,000.00	3,096.00
450,000.00	460,000.00	3,156.00
460,000.00	470,000.00	3,216.00
470,000.00	480,000.00	3,276.00
480,000.00	490,000.00	3,336.00
490,000.00	500,000.00	3,396.00
500,000.00	520,000.00	3,486.00
520,000.00	540,000.00	3,576.00
540,000.00	560,000.00	3,666.00
560,000.00	580,000.00	3,756.00
580,000.00	600,000.00	3,846.00
600,000.00	620,000.00	3,936.00
620,000.00	640,000.00	4,026.00
640,000.00	660,000.00	4,116.00
660,000.00	680,000.00	4,206.00
680,000.00	700,000.00	4,296.00
700,000.00	720,000.00	4,386.00
720,000.00	740,000.00	4,476.00
740,000.00	760,000.00	4,566.00
760,000.00	780,000.00	4,656.00
780,000.00	800,000.00	4,746.00
800,000.00	820,000.00	4,836.00
820,000.00	840,000.00	4,926.00
840,000.00	860,000.00	5,016.00
860,000.00	880,000.00	5,106.00
880,000.00	900,000.00	5,196.00
900,000.00	920,000.00	5,286.00
920,000.00	940,000.00	5,376.00
940,000.00	960,000.00	5,466.00
960,000.00	980,000.00	5,556.00
980,000.00	1,000,000.00	5,646.00
1,000,000.00	1,020,000.00	5,736.00
1,020,000.00	1,040,000.00	5,826.00
1,040,000.00	1,060,000.00	5,916.00
1,060,000.00	1,080,000.00	6,006.00
1,080,000.00	1,100,000.00	6,096.00
1,100,000.00	1,120,000.00	6,186.00
1,120,000.00	1,140,000.00	6,276.00
1,140,000.00	1,160,000.00	6,366.00
1,160,000.00	1,180,000.00	6,456.00
1,180,000.00	1,200,000.00	6,546.00
1,200,000.00	1,220,000.00	6,636.00
1,220,000.00	1,240,000.00	6,726.00
1,240,000.00	1,260,000.00	6,816.00
1,260,000.00	1,280,000.00	6,906.00
1,280,000.00	1,300,000.00	6,996.00
1,300,000.00	1,320,000.00	7,086.00
1,320,000.00	1,340,000.00	7,176.00
1,340,000.00	1,360,000.00	7,266.00
1,360,000.00	1,380,000.00	7,356.00
1,380,000.00	1,400,000.00	7,446.00
1,400,000.00	1,420,000.00	7,536.00
1,420,000.00	1,440,000.00	7,626.00
1,440,000.00	1,460,000.00	7,716.00
1,460,000.00	1,480,000.00	7,806.00
1,480,000.00	1,500,000.00	7,896.00
1,500,000.00	1,520,000.00	7,986.00
1,520,000.00	1,540,000.00	8,076.00
1,540,000.00	1,560,000.00	8,166.00
1,560,000.00	1,580,000.00	8,256.00
1,580,000.00	1,600,000.00	8,346.00
1,600,000.00	1,620,000.00	8,436.00
1,620,000.00	1,640,000.00	8,526.00
1,640,000.00	1,660,000.00	8,616.00
1,660,000.00	1,680,000.00	8,706.00
1,680,000.00	1,700,000.00	8,796.00

And for every P20,000.00 or fraction thereof; in excess of P1,700,000.00, in addition to fee of 8,796.00 90.00

17. Issuance of copy of document - for furnishing copies of any entry, decree, document, or other papers on file - for each hundred words or fraction thereof contained in the copies thus furnished - 3.00
18. Certified copy - For certifying a copy furnished under the next preceeding paragraph, for each certification:
    - For one page certified 30.00
    - For each additional page certified 6:00
19. Certification - For issuing a certification relative to or showing the existence or non-existence of, an entry in the registration books or a document on file, for each such certificate containing not more than two hundred words - 30.00

    If this exceeds that number an additional fee shall be collected for every hundred words, or fraction thereof, in excess of the first two hundred words - 6.00
20. Research fee - For services rendered in attending to request for reference or researches on any records or documents on file in the Registry, there shall be collected per document or record - 12.00

D. Fees payable to the Administrator of Land Registration -

The fees payable to the Administrator of Land Registration shall be as follows:

1. For verification and approval of subdivision plans, the fee shall be:
   a. For each lot 12.00
   b. For each corner of a lot, irrespective of whether such corner is common to the two or more lot 1.20
   c. For each traverse station 0.60
   d. For each observation 3.00
   e. In case the plan is a resurvey or relocation plan, an additional 40 percent of the rates prescribed above shall be collected.

   Provided, however, that the total fee as computed above, whether for subdivision survey, resurvey or relocation plan, shall in no case be less than - 48.00
2. For changing or correcting the name of any person appearing on the subidivision plan or other plan in order to have it conform to that stated in the certificate of title covering the land, and for the cancellation an approved plan when so requested by the interested party, there shall be a fee of - 30.00
3. The rates of fees prescribed in paragraphs 1 and 2, inclusive shall apply to similar services rendered in connection with the examination, verification and approval of consolidation, consolidation-subdivision, resubdivision, and reconsolidation plans, special work order plans on the basis of certified copies of technical descriptions of plans approved by the Land Registration or the Land Management Bureau, private surveys, and other plans of similar nature in the computation of fees relative to lots subject of consolidation and consolidation-subdivision plans, a fee shall be collected per lot as appearing in the old survey in addition to the fee collectible in paragraph 1 hereof for the lots - 12.00
4. For the preparation of a plan in tracing cloth of any survey the data of which are available in the Authority, except when same is merely traced from an existing plan - the fees shall be computed as follows:
   a. When the plan to be so prepared contained only one lot:
      1. For the first ten corners or fraction thereof 240.00
      2. For the next ten corners or fraction thereof 36.00
      3. For each corner in excess of the first twenty corners 2.40
   b. When the plan to be so prepared contains two or more lots:
      1. For the first lot which must be the biggest of the group, irrespective of the number of its corners 240.00
      2. For each additional lot irrespective of the number of its corner, said lot being adjacent to the first lot or any other lot 90.00
      3. For each non-adjacent lot (other than the first charged lot), irrespective of the number of its corners 120.00
      4. If any lot contains more than twenty corners of such lot in the first twenty corners 2.40
5. For the preparation of a plan in tracing cloth, to be traced from an existing plan, complete with bearings and distances of corners and the-lines, the fee shall be 30 per centrum of the fees prescribed in paragraph 4 above.
6. For the preparation of plan in tracing cloth, to be copied from an existing plan, complete with bearings and distances of sides and tie-lines, but using a different scale, the fee shall be 50 per centrum of the fees prescribed under paragraph 4 above, if made on a reduced scale: or 60 per centrum of the same fees, if made on an enlarged scale.
7. For the preparation of a simple plan or sketch of any available survey or plan on any paper other than a tracing cloth, the fee on the basis of each lot, shall be as follows:
   a. For the first ten corners or fraction thereof 120.00
   b. For the second ten corners or fraction thereof 30.00
   c. For the third ten corners or fraction thereof 12.00
   d. For each corner in excess of the first thirty corners 1.20
   e. If the sketch is prepareed in tracing cloth, add to the total fees as above computed 30.00
   f. If the plan or sketch so prepared contains the bearingand distances of the sides and tie-lines, add to the total as above computed 10 per centrum thereof.
8. For furnishing a plan copy (blue print, or white print) of any plan on file in the Authority, the fees shall be as follows:
   a. For the copy of any size not exceeding forty square decimeters 18.00
   b. For one copy of more than forty square decimeters but not exceeding eighty square decimeters in size 36.00
   c. For one copy of more than eighty square decimeters but not exceeding one hundred twenty square decimeter in size 54.00
   d. For one copy in excess of one hundred twenty square decimeter in size the basic rate of twenty seven pesos plus for every twenty square decimeters or fraction thereof in excess. 3.00
9. For the preparation of technical descriptions, other than mere copying from an existing copy, there shall be collected the following fees:
   a. For technical description of lots or parcel, typewritten in triplicate and doublespaced, including certification:
      1. For each lot 18.00
      2. For each corner of a lot 1.20
      3. For each extra copy, extra charge 1.20
      4. Minimum total charge 18.00
   b. For lot description prepared in tracing cloth (on tabulated form) including certification:
      1. For each sheet 9.00
      2. For each lot 1.20
      3. For each corner in excess of ten for a lot 0.60
10. For certification of plans or copies of plans as to the correctness of the same, per plan or print copy 18.00
    and for the issuance of all other certifications - 30.00
11. For inspection of lands subject of private surveys, simple or complex subdivision plans, or consolidation, consolidation-subdivision, resubdivision, or re-consolidation plans special work orders, and other plans of similar nature for the purpose of verification and/or approval:
    a. For each plan with an aggregate area of 1,000 sq.meters or less 600.00
    b. For each subdivision with an aggregate area of more than 1,000 sq.m.
       1. For the first 1,000 sq. meters 600.00
       2. For every succeeding 1,000 sq. meters or fraction thereof 60.00
12. For actual field work of subdivision survey, relocation survey and resurvey of land, the fees shall be as follows:
    a. Subdivision survey:
       1. Rural (Agricultural)
          Area
          For the first hectare 2,100.00
          For the second hectare to 10th hectare. An additional per ha. 360.00
          For the 11th hectare to 20th ha. An additional per hectare 180.00
          For the 21st hectare to 30th ha. An additional per hectare 120.00
          For the 31st hectare to 200th ha. An additional per hectare. 60.00
          For 201st hectare or over. An additional per hectare 48.00
       2. Urban (Solar)
          For 220 sq. meters or less 2,100.00
          Succeeding 201 sq. meters or more (per 100 sq. meters) 120.00

SEC. 116 : Fees for chattel mortgages, etc. – The Register of Deeds shall collect the following fees for services rendered by him under this section:

1. Entry fee – For entry or presentation of any document in the Primary Entry Book 30.00
2. Chattel Mortgage – For filing and recording each chattel mortgage including the necessary certificates and affidavits, the fees established in Sec. 111;C.16
3. Notice of Attachment – For recording each notice of attachment, including the necessary index and annotations - 48.00
4. Release of Attachment – For recording each release of attachment, including the proper annotations. 30.00
5. Sheriff's return of sale – For recording each sheriff's return of sale including the index and references - 42.00
6. Power of Attorney, appointment of guardian, administrator or trustee – For recording a power of attorneys appointment of judicial guardian, administrator or trustee, or any other instrument in which a person is given power to act in behalf of another in connection with a mortgage 60.00
7. No Specific Fee – For recording each instrument or order relating to a recorded mortgage, including the necessary index and references for which no specific fee is provided above - 30.00
8. Certification – For issuing a certificate relative to, or showing the existence or non-existence of an entry in the registration book, or a document on file, for each such certificate containing not more than two hundred words - 30.00

   If it exceeds that number, an additional fee shall be collected for every one hundred words or fractional part thereof in excess of the first two hundred words – 6.00
9. Research Fee – For services rendered in attending to requests for references to, or researches on any document on file in the Registry, there shall be collected a fee per document of - 12.00

For Implementation.

(Sgd.) **HON. BENEDICTO B. ULEP**
Administrator

Approved:

(Sgd.) **HON. HERNANDO B. PEREZ**
Secretary of Justice

(PDI--Jan. 10 & 17, 2003)

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At dusk weeping comes for the night;
but joy comes in the morning...
Lord you are my God,
I will give you thanks forever.
— Psalm 30

Patricia Anne "Trisha" Panlilio Borromeo

(August 25, 1971 - January 8, 2003)

The daughter of the late **Dr. Ramon N. Borromeo**, *Trisha* is survived by her mother **Myrna Panlilio Borromeo**; brother **RJ**; his wife **Trina** and niece **Sammi**; sister **Mitzi**; grandmother **Jaina Sese Panlilio**, her uncles, aunts, cousins, other relatives and friends.

Her remains lie at the Santuario de San Jose Church in Greenhills East, Mandaluyong City. Funeral rites on Sunday. Details to be announced.

Her family and friends request for prayers of thanksgiving for a life lived well.

Instead of flowers, the family would welcome donations to the Kythe Foundation which supports children with cancer.

ENGR. RODRIGO B. BALANA

of Bacacay, Albay & Marikina City
25 February 1935 – 7 January 2003

His wife Angelita (†); children Rosvida Anne & family, Rowena Alma & family, Roy Alan & family, Rio Andrew (†), companion Linda; relatives, friends and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Chapel 3 in Loyola Chapel – Marikina.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 12, 2003, 10:00 a.m. at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina.

EDUARDO BAUTISTA GONZALES

BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on January 7, 2003 at the age of 64.

His bereaved wife **Zeny**; loving children and in-laws **Eric** and **Eileen**, **Edwin** and **Mercy**, **Eileen** and **Rod**; grandchildren **Kevin**, **Kurt**, **Keisha** and **Ina**; sisters **Gloria** and **Cely**; Brothers **Ric**, **Sonny** and **Jun**; nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Chapel No. 3, Magallanes Village, Makati City.

Interment will be on Saturday, January 11, 2003 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

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Honorata "Nory" Fruto Sr.

RETIRED L.T.O. REGISTRAR (LA LOMA)
April 1, 1926 – January 6, 2003

His children Boy (†) & Lanie, Baby & Zeny, Sonny, Luisa, Rico & Alice, Ric & Lehlet, Ricky & Elvie, Lito, Noryli & Jimmy, John-John & Eden, Maricar & Roland, Annaly and Jayjay; sister Leonor and grandchildren, request the pious readers to remember Nory in their prayers.

The body lies in state at St. Peter's Memorial Chapel (Ambassador Room) Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be at Eternal Gardens Novaliches (to be announced later) for further details, please contact Cell No. (0916-5932141).

Please omit flowers.

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AGUSTIN RIZALDI C. SAN AGUSTIN

of KAMUNING, QUEZON CITY

Peacefully joined his Creator
on January 7, 2003 at the age of 65.

His loving wife **CHOLLIE**; children **MARIZEL & ROLAND CHU, RAYMOND**, and **RIZZA**; grandchildren, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Chapel K, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 12, 2003 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

COL. GABRIEL R. MASCARDO

of Imus, Cavite
(1926 – 2003)

Gabriel "Iling" Reyes Mascardo moved on last Sunday, January 5, 2003 at the age of 76.

His children **Gaspar Lito** and **Ma. Luisa, Gilberto** and **Maribeth, Gabriel Jr.** and **Rosario, Glenn** and **Virginia, Ma. Gracia** and **James Raya** and grandchildren request the pious readers to join us in our prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapel Guadalupe.

Interment will be on Saturday, January 11, 2003 at Loyola Memorial Park, Parañaque immediately after the 10:30 a.m. Mass at Don Bosco Parish, Makati.

You have let me experience the JOYS of life
and the exquisite pleasures of your own eternal presence. Ps 16:11

JOSEPH RAYMOND CRISOL SALAZAR

27 October 1943 – 07 January 2003

Son of **Dr. Rodrigo E. Salazar (†)** and **Salvacion Crisol-Salazar (†)**.

His wife **Renee Llaguno-Salazar**; children **Chippy** and **Aireen Imperial**; **Eena** and **Melvin Sarayba**; **Happy** and **Guilder Bringas**; and **Boris**; grandchildren **Diego**, **Luigi** and **Una**; brothers and sisters, brothers- and sisters-in-law, nephews, nieces and other relatives request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

The body lies in state at the Don Bosco Funeral Chapel (Hope), Pasay Road, Makati City where funeral services will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 12, 2003. Cremation follows at the Loyola Memorial Chapel, Makati City.

"Whoever finds his life will lose it,
and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it." — Matthew 10:39

Our Beloved Tatay

Guillermo "Guilling" L. Roxas

Former Councilor and Vice Mayor of Tanauan, Batangas
Director, Batangas Elec. Cooperative II
Director, BISPCMA

Peacefully joined his Creator on January 5, 2003 at the age of 75.

Wife **Leonora**; children **Elena** and **Gerry Mercado**, **Naning** and **Tina**, **Noll** and **Evelyn**, **Nemy** and **Johnny Platon**, **Abet** and **Luz**, **Zeny**, **Bellie**, **Josie** and **Udo Schilling** and **Fe**; sisters **Maring** (+), **Luming**, **Rora**, **Atring**, **Linda**; brothers **Julio** (+), **Dandong** (+), **Edong**, **Nestor**, **Rudolf** and **Jeffrey**; grandchildren and great grandchildren, relatives and friends request those whose lives he touched to join them in praising God for his life now in the company of his Beloved Creator.

His remains lie in state at his residdence in Brgy. Sambat, Tanauan City, Batangas.

Interment will be on Tuesday, January 14, 2003 after the necrological services at Tanauan Municipal Hall, after the 1:00 p.m. Mass, at Tanauan Municipal Cemetery, Tanauan City, Batangas.

For God
so loved
the world, that
He gave His
only begotten
Son, that
whoever
believes in
Him shall not
perish but
have
everlasting
life. John 3:16

GAVINO B. ATENGCO, SR.

Peacefully joined his Creator
on January 8, 2003 at the age of 79.

His bereaved wife **SIMEONA**; children **ANGELITA, ZENY, NELLIE, FELY, LINDA, REYNALDO, ROMEO, ERIC, GAVINO, JR., MIMAY, BABONG, RICKY, MALOU & CHIE**; grandchildren & great grandchildren, children-in-law **ELMER, SHEM, RENE, CARLOS, LOURDES, CIELO, JOY & NILO**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

Garment exports down 6% in '02 due to US market slump

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

EXPORTS of garments and textile fell by 6 percent in 2002 as the US market remained in a slump and local apparel makers were adjusting to reforms in the allocation of quotas.

Garments and Textile Export Board executive director Serafin Juliano said that garments and textile exports should hit $2.8 billion in 2002 from $2.974 billion 2001. This is the second straight year that garments and textile exports have been on the decline.

The slowdown in garments and textile exports could be traced to weak demand in the US (which accounted for nearly 75 percent of all exports) specifically on low-priced, non-apparel products.

Juliano said most of the 1,500 garments and textile manufacturers were still adjusting to the reforms initiated by the government in 2001 to prod industry players to upgrade their operations to world-class standards, focus on high-end, high-margin products, and adhere to ethical manufacturing standards in exchange for getting more quota allocations to the US.

Despite the challenges facing the industry in the next few years, the GTEB and the industry's players remained upbeat on the long-term prospects of the industry even after the abolition of US quota by 2005.

Confederation of Garments Exporters of the Philippines chair Donald Dee said the reforms have so far proven effective in boosting the competitiveness of industry players. "I can safely say that the industry is now in a much better shape than it was before the reforms were made in 2001. We are confident that we can at least retain the current level of garments and textile exports at $2.8 billion even if US quotas were abolished today."

Dee said that foreign buyers of garments and textiles did not shift to other countries for their supplies but merely shifted to other Philippine manufacturers that offered to produce their goods faster and within their set standards.

Philippine Luen Thai Holdings president Willie Tan said the industry should have the discipline to produce quality goods and the commitment to invest in developing capacities.

Congep president George Siy said that the key to the industry's survival in the post-quota period was the promotion of Philippine apparel brands and adoption of technological advances.

This is why Congep supported the staging of the Source It trade fair which is currently on-going at the World Trade Center. Siy said the integrated clothing and textile sourcing fair was aimed at showcasing the best in Philippine branded apparel as well as bringing together foreign suppliers of machine and local apparel and textile makers.

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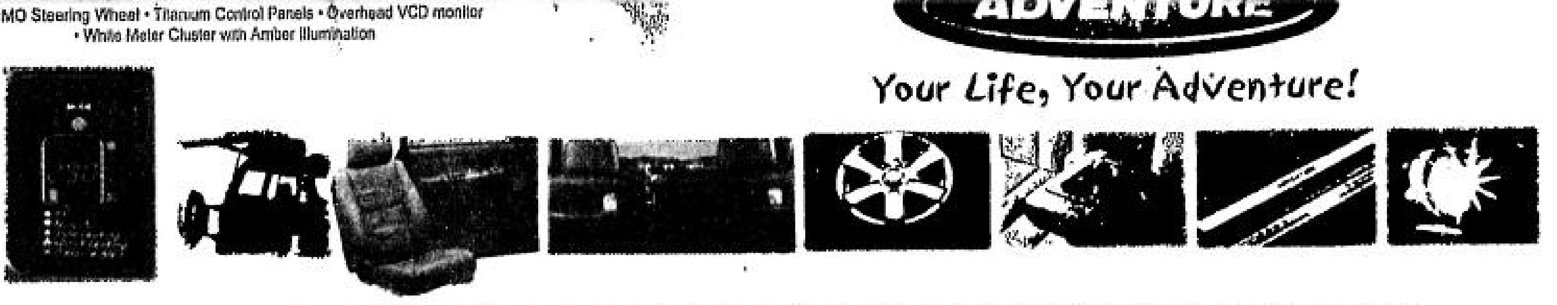
Grand Sport



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LIFESTYLE
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Looking for her corner of the sky

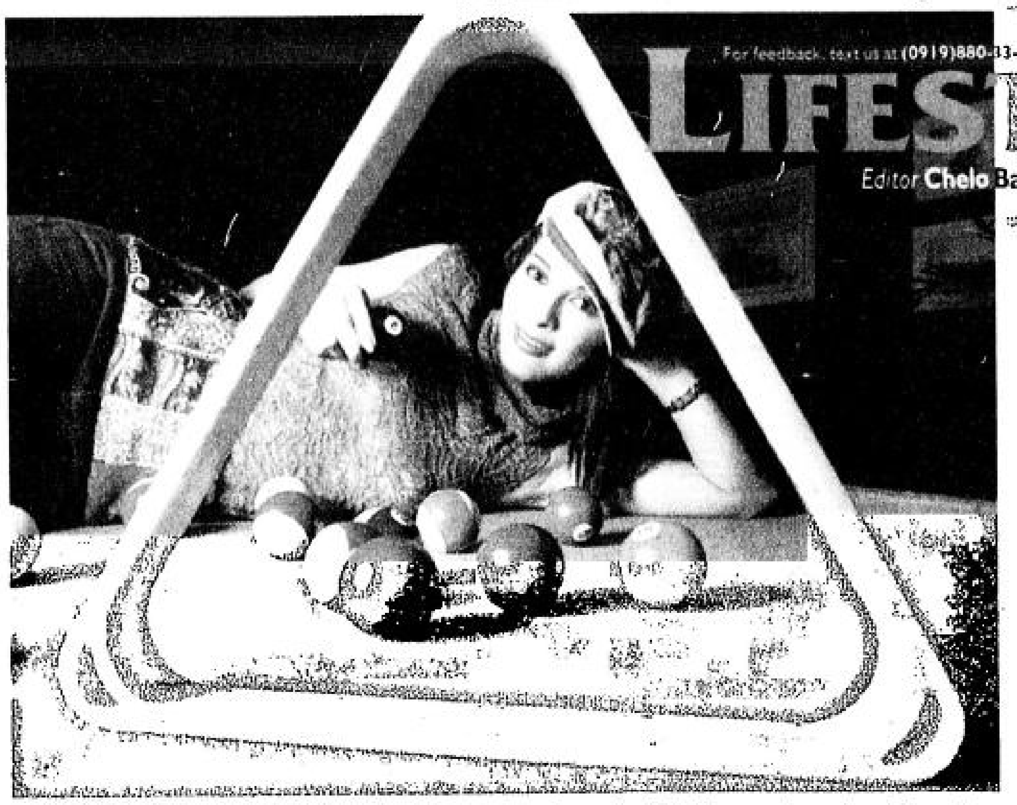

TABLE FOR ONE. Giselle Tongi's "attitude" shows in a pair of Earl jeans, sleeveless blouse by Freeway and an Indian hipster belt by Patrice Ramos-Diaz.

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Dennis Sabangan

DESPITE living on a tight budget in the United States for almost two years now, actress Giselle "G" Tongi has managed to remain a fashion plate. If anything, the experience has taught her to become a smarter and more practical shopper as she patiently waits for the big break.

"I've prepared myself for it," she says. "Being practical means buying a few good pieces such as a nice pair of shoes or a belt and learning to mix and match existing pieces in my wardrobe."

SINGULAR STYLE

Giselle, of course, left an established showbiz career in Manila to pursue her dream of making it in the US. After being based in New York for almost two years, she recently moved to Los Angeles to try her luck there. While in the Big Apple, she attended acting classes at the prestigious Lee Strassberg School and held odd jobs in-between auditions.

But those grueling auditions will have to wait. Giselle has been in Manila for the holidays to be with family and friends. In between reunions, she has appeared on several TV shows, particularly GMA's "SOP" and "Beh Bote Nga." She hopes to be back in LA soon to take advantage of the city's "casting season."

"I love New York, but there are more opportunities in LA," she explains. "It's usually this time of the year when network executives cast talents for the start of the fall TV season."

Struggling actor

Just like any struggling actor, Giselle has learned to make do with her limited resources to survive. That means cutting down on unnecessary expenses and learning seemingly mundane tasks she used to delegate to others.

What used to be routine trips to the beauty parlor have now become a luxury. To stretch her hard-earned dollars, for instance, she has learned to do her own nails. She even does her own makeup for this photo shoot.

"The experience has taught me to take care of myself even more since I can't afford most of the things I used to take for granted," she says. "I've also had lots of time to learn new things like bartending." She's now a licensed bartender and is raring to put her training to good use.

Not only is cash harder to come by in the US, the freebies in the form of gifts from Giselle's designer friends and exchange deals with garment companies have now become things of the past. Rather than stymie her sense of style, however, such limitations have all the more inspired her to continue to evolve.

"I was trendier, funkier and younger two years ago," she says of her fashion sense. "I always put into consideration the 'attention factor.' Now, I'm smarter and more practical with my choice of clothes."

In lieu of mindless shopping sprees, Giselle has learned to plan ahead before scouring department stores and flea markets in search of inexpensive but interesting pieces. During one of her trips to Milan, for instance, she chanced upon a fringed black scarf made of lace from one of the city's obscure flea markets.

"I got it very cheap," she says proudly of the black apparel that accents her dangerously low pair of Diesel jeans. She also doesn't mind waiting for inventory sales, especially if she has to save for food and other necessities.

"It's as simple as choosing between a fancy bag and a decent dinner," she says. They can have their bag. This woman will never go to bed hungry.

"I don't spend an arm and a leg on clothes anymore," she adds. "The most expensive piece in my wardrobe is the attitude. Every woman should have one. It's priceless."

Gung-ho

The same gung-ho spirit is very much evident during this photo shoot.

Before Giselle's friends from Genesis Entertainment can stop her, she manages to climb a ledge on the Discovery Suites' 36th floor be-

LOOKING/ C2

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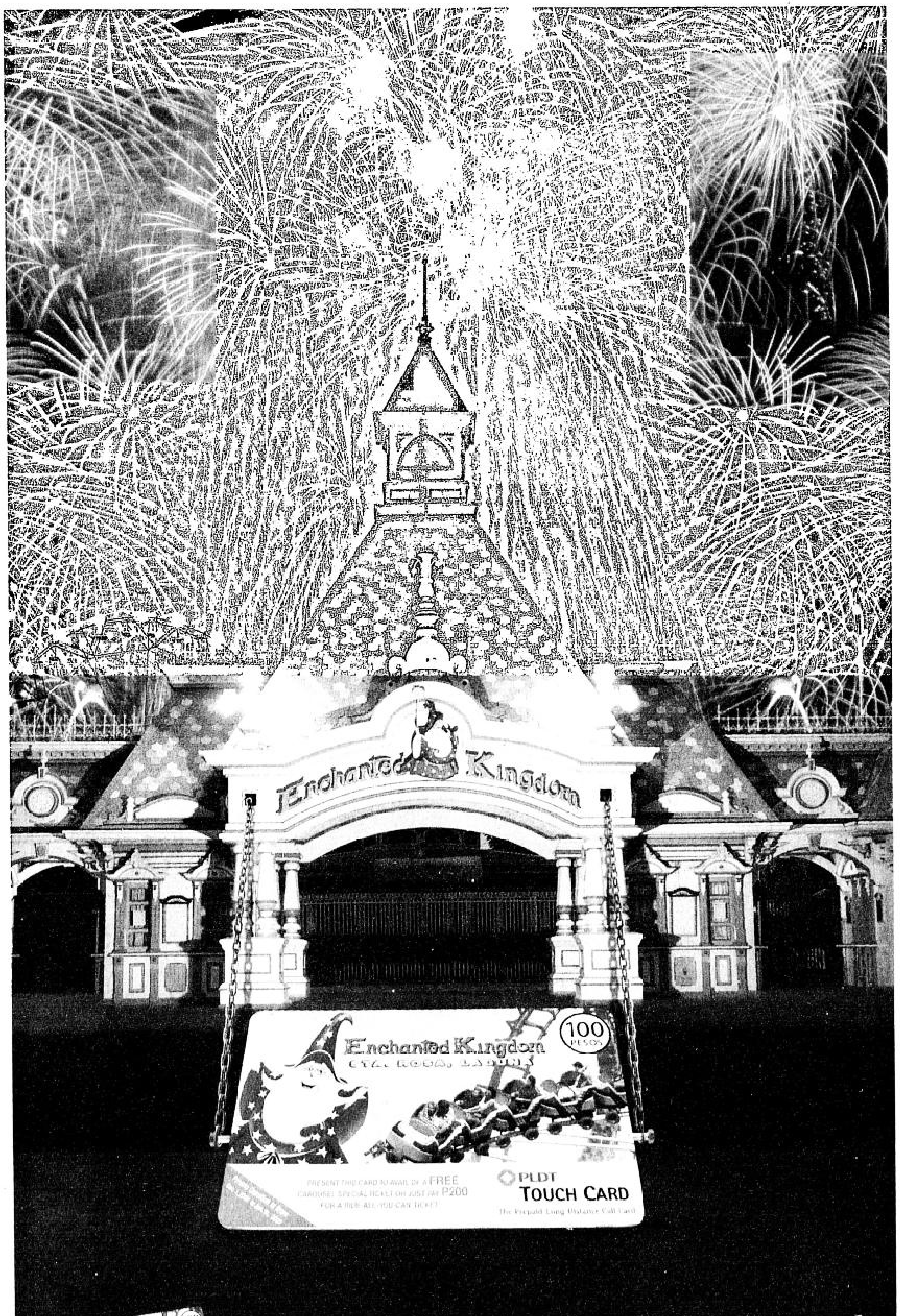

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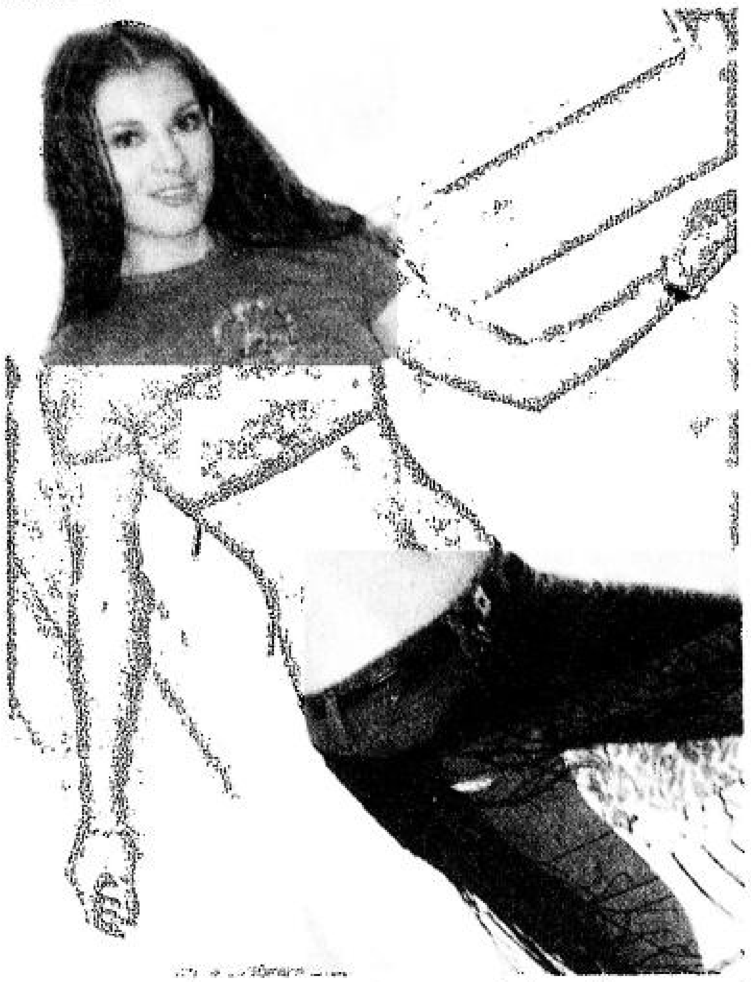


BELLYBUTTON GIRL. She visits the gym regularly and does yoga and Pilates to fit into a beaded cropped tee by Mimi and Juliet Tan, Gucci leather belt and a pair of dangerously low Diesel jeans. Lace scarf is a treasured find from a Milan flea market.

READY FOR CLOSE UP. She goes glam in a vintage Patrice Ramos-Diaz column made of organza, studded with caviar beads and spangles and accented with a fringed cabbage rose.

Looking for her corner of the sky

In search of the American dream, Giselle Tongi has learned to scrimp on her clothes but not on her style

From page C1

fore gamely posing for pictures with Metro Manila's skyline as her backdrop. She then rests her right foot on the ledge unmindful of the people holding on to her left foot.

Genesis manages her career in the Philippines, while Discovery Suites plays host to her every time she flies to Manila. "It has been my home away from home," she says.

Such a bold outlook also extends to how Giselle views her career. The actress has had more than her share of rejections—too many, in fact—as she went from one audition to another. Rather than dampen her spirits, the rebuffs have strengthened her resolve to continue.

"An actor has to have an appetite for rejection," she says. "Otherwise, you'd quit or go crazy."

Not a few were surprised when the potential superstar decided to drop everything and head abroad. Since she was doing very well here not only as an actress, but also as a dancer and MTV host (she even cut an album), some even called her move foolish.

"I don't derive happiness from stardom," she says. "What keeps me happy is the chance to do good work. Whether I succeed or not is beside the point. At least, when I grow old I can say to myself that I tried."

Didn't she get that same sense of fulfillment here?

"We have plenty of talented people," she says, "but it's hard to take off when you're catering to a certain market. You're limited because you have to follow a certain formula that ultimately hinders your creativity."

Giselle's numerous gowns, now stored in her mom's home in Alabang, mirror in no small way the body of work she has earned from six years in local show biz. She has yet to find the right venue to showcase her wardrobe as well as her talent.

"I have dozens and dozens of gowns," she gushes. "But since I have yet to be invited to the Oscars, I have no affair to wear them to."

Despite the many disappointments, Giselle has plenty of reasons to celebrate. She will soon star in "Buhay Kano," a TV series about Filipino life in the US. It will be shot in Washington D.C. by a Filipino director. Next month, she's set to do "World Without End," an independent film to be directed by Christopher Castillo, son of film director Celso Ad Castillo.

She will soon try her hand at producing with her New Jersey-based sister Avie Cabral. The two have recently formed Sisters Act Production. "I'm also helping write the script," she says, "but it's too early to go into details."

Not that she minds, but Giselle has little time for love. She hasn't had a boyfriend for almost seven months now.

"A commitment is the last thing on my mind right now," she says. "I'm not ready to settle down anytime soon. Marriage can wait. Anyway, I'm only 24." And Giselle Tongi's American dream is just a good movie role away.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

VERY G. The actress has reverted to her full name but has dropped the "e" from her last name. Minor changes really for an all-time hip dresser.

SKY'S THE LIMIT. Giselle jumps for joy—sans her pair of Nine West mules—in a pair of fringed Diesel jeans, BCBG tuxedo halter top, chain belt and newsboy cap.

MAKEUP: GISELLE TONGI
HAIR: REGGIE REYES OF PARADIGM, DISCOVERY SUITES
LOCATION: DISCOVERY SUITES,
SAN MIGUEL AVENUE, ORTIGAS CENTER

Salon of repose and self-boost

After 15 years in the business, Piandre now has a lock on pampering

Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Roger Carpio

HAVING been in the beauty business for 15 years now, Piandre Salon definitely knows that women want to be pampered from head to toe. This is the reason the newly opened outlet of Piandre in Libis, QC, has been designed as the ultimate salon.

Piandre in Libis doesn't only give basic services such as hairstyling, nail care and makeup; it also provides a sanctuary where women are pampered, blissfully cocooned away from the frenetic pace of metro living.

The salon now offers spa services. Apart from hair and scalp treatment, it has added sauna and other leisure and beauty services, such as facial and body treatments. Piandre in Libis also has a jacuzzi in its massage room.

The hours extend till past 10 for people who want a little pampering after dinner or work.

"Spa has been a buzzword for self-preservation and pampering," says Andrea Zulueta, Piandre's merchandise manager. "We are here to spoil our clients and create unique services for them. We want to be a one-stop pampering salon."

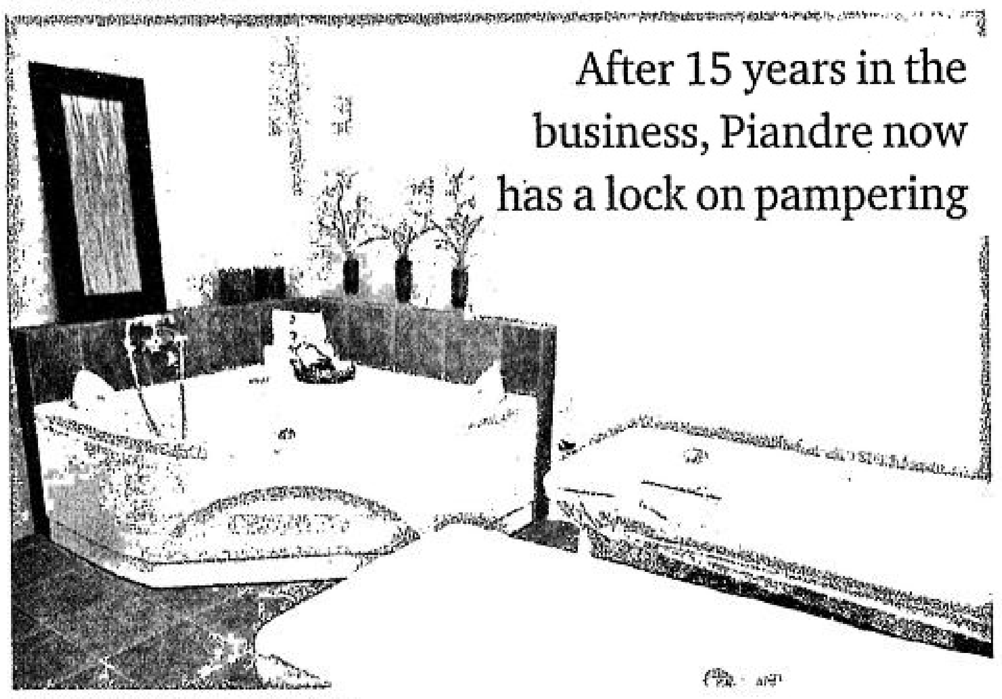
Piandre in Libis, the biggest in the chain at 400 sq m, features a unique waterfall in the main styling area to soothe patrons into a feeling of relaxation while having their hair done.

The interiors are set in neutral colors, with a mix of white and bright yellow lighting that complements the styling mirrors. There are no wall partitions that often constrict the look in the spacious working area.

Salon supplies, such as towels, shampoos, nail polish and other hairstyling products, are neatly stacked in wooden shelves. From the entry, there's a narrow hallway on the right that leads to the massage area, where the aromatherapy, Indian head massage, foot massage and chair massage are done.

A huge mirror gives an illusion of space. Cushioned seats provide comfort. Beauty products and cosmetics are tastefully displayed for sale, including Davines, a new hair color and hair care line from Italy.

SALON supplies are neatly stacked in wooden shelves.


A JACUZZI in the massage room

Beyond the central working area, there are two private rooms for VIPs who may prefer privacy.

Family affair

Piandre Salon is family-owned; it is run by Linda Francisco's daughters—Peachy, Aina and Andrea, hence the name.

Andrea handles merchandise and product development; Peachy is the general manager and takes care of the daily operations. Aina is in charge of training, research and development. Linda is the president. Piandre now has six branches in Metro Manila.

Business has always been brisk since the family started Piandre in 1987 on Amorsolo Street, Makati.

Just recently, Piandre relaunched its newly renovated salon in Timog Avenue. To accommodate its growing clientele, the Timog branch is now a three-story, full-service beauty salon with a reflexology area and several rooms for hair treatment, waxing, facial and massage.

Piandre's advantage is its well-trained staff. "Everyone, from stylists to therapists, knows the right service to give to our clients, from hair coloring and makeup to facial treatment and body massage," says Andrea.

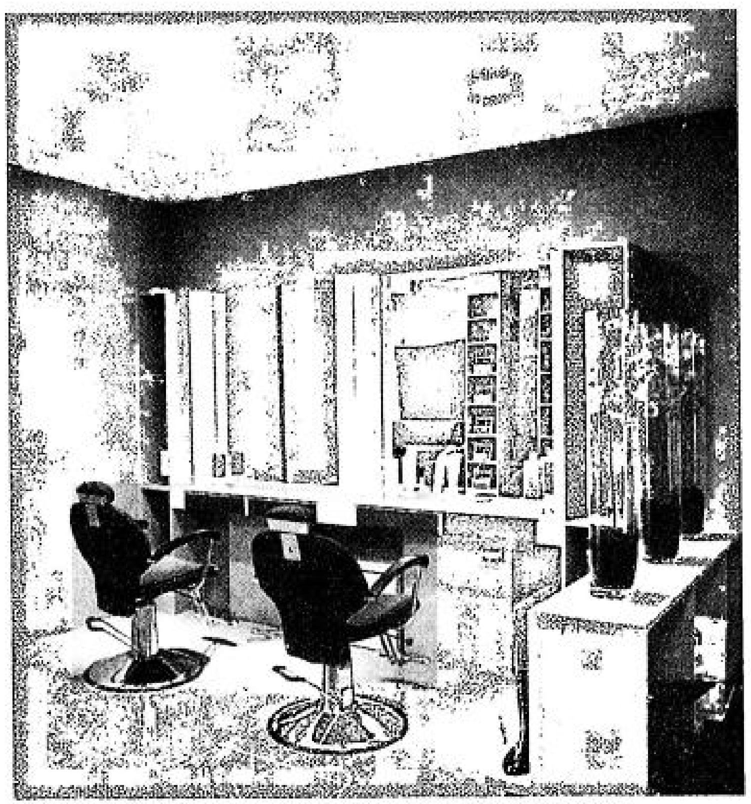
PEACHY Zulueta, Linda Francisco and Andrea Zulueta

Piandre's therapists have been trained in Hong Kong to offer clients delicate services such as eyelash curling and relaxing services such as Indian head massage, chair massage and foot reflexology.

A selected group of Piandre's stylists were recently in Singapore for a cut and color seminar at the Toni and Guy Academy. They were taught the latest in coloring style called creative shading, learning a new, faster and safer way of doing multicolored highlights.

Piandre Salons are located at Timog Avenue, QC; Del Monte Avenue, QC; Greenbelt, Makati; Greenhills, San Juan; and Libis, QC.

E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph


PIANDRE in Libis has two rooms for VIPs who want privacy.

Local product's as good as foreign brands

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

ALLURE magazine reported that all makeup products in the United States were more or less made in the same factories regardless of brand and price. The quality may differ but all basic ingredients and suppliers are the same.

Watercolors (WC) cosmetic is the very first high-end "Filipino" makeup in the country. I hesitate to call it local because although it is only available here, owner Val dela Fuente sources his products from the US—from the same factories that cater to big American companies.

Dela Fuente wants to make good quality makeup accessible to Filipinos. His products may be more expensive than most local brands because of import costs and quality, but they are definitely cheaper than imports.

The main store is on the 4/F of Shangri-La Edsa. Dela Fuente's sales staff is well-trained to assist you.

You can also have your hair and makeup done at the store for P650—if you are attending an affair. Look for Abby.

I was very surprised to find that many of Watercolors' products are similar in formula, smell and color to famous American brands.

Foundation—If you find it hard to find a match for your skin, WC can custom-blend one for you using either oil-free or moisturizing formula for P880. The available shades sell for P680 each.

For those with oily skin, I recommend the cream-to-powder foundation with SPF 20 that sells for P980. It glides on like a cream but sets like a light, semi-matte powder, effectively covering imperfections but giving a sheer effect.

For those with normal-dry skin who want a concealer, foundation and powder in one, they can get the stick foundation with SPF 8 at P680. At the moment, only one shade is available, but Dela Fuente is ordering other shades. Soft Creme is a shade between Bobbi s/f's Warm Ivory and Sand and L'Oreal Quikstik's Nude Beige and Natural Beige.

Another WC specialty are the color/texture correctors for liquid formulas at P380 each. The products work this way: For instance, if you found the color of the product you bought a bit too pink or yellow and/or the texture too thick or watery, bring it to the WC boutique and they will fix it for you. Then you wouldn't have to throw or give the product away.

Powders—Loose powders are yellow-based, available in Light, Neutral and Nude for P680 each. Custom-blend loose powders are P880. WC's pressed powders are called Minerals. Its multicolored Collage Powders (P980) are similar to Guerlain's meteorites pressed powder and they come in three shades: Pastel (correctors), Luna (peachy), and Jolie (great for under eyes and highlighting).

Eye shadows—Triple split eye shadows at P480 (three colors in one compact) are similar to Clarins and Shiseido. Matte shadows at P380 are pigment-rich, similar to Lancome and Paula Dorf. Sheer shadows at P320 are comparable to Bobbi Brown shimmerwash.

Lip gloss (P420)—The Baby Doll gloss is so close to the Nars lip lacquer of the same name. It's a sheer pink shade that even smells the same as Nars.

Makeup brushes—I cannot emphasize enough how important natural hairbrushes are for a professional polished finish. The right tools are very expensive but they last forever.

WC brushes are made of badger, sable squirrel and raccoon hair, and they are the most reasonably priced so far. The cheapest brush is P280 (cake eyeliner) and the most expensive is P1,180 (squirrel hair eye base brush). I got both plus the raccoon hair under-eye brush remover. The raccoon hair brush dissolves the most stubborn of eye makeups and is oil free so it won't cause breakouts. Also contains soothing properties like algae to soothe sensitive skin. Comes in three sizes: S-P280, M-P480 and L-P780. Comparable to L.M. eye remover, it also doubles as a makeup remover/cleansing gel for normal to oily skin. Removes every trace of makeup.

Makeup kits—Prices range from P3,000 to P15,000. I got the portable one for P3,800, a tiffany blue plastic case with silver metal combination for out-of-town trips. Has space for all makeup necessities.

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Also, don't miss out on gigantic discount offers in popular shopping districts for a great shopping spree.

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*Event to be confirmed.

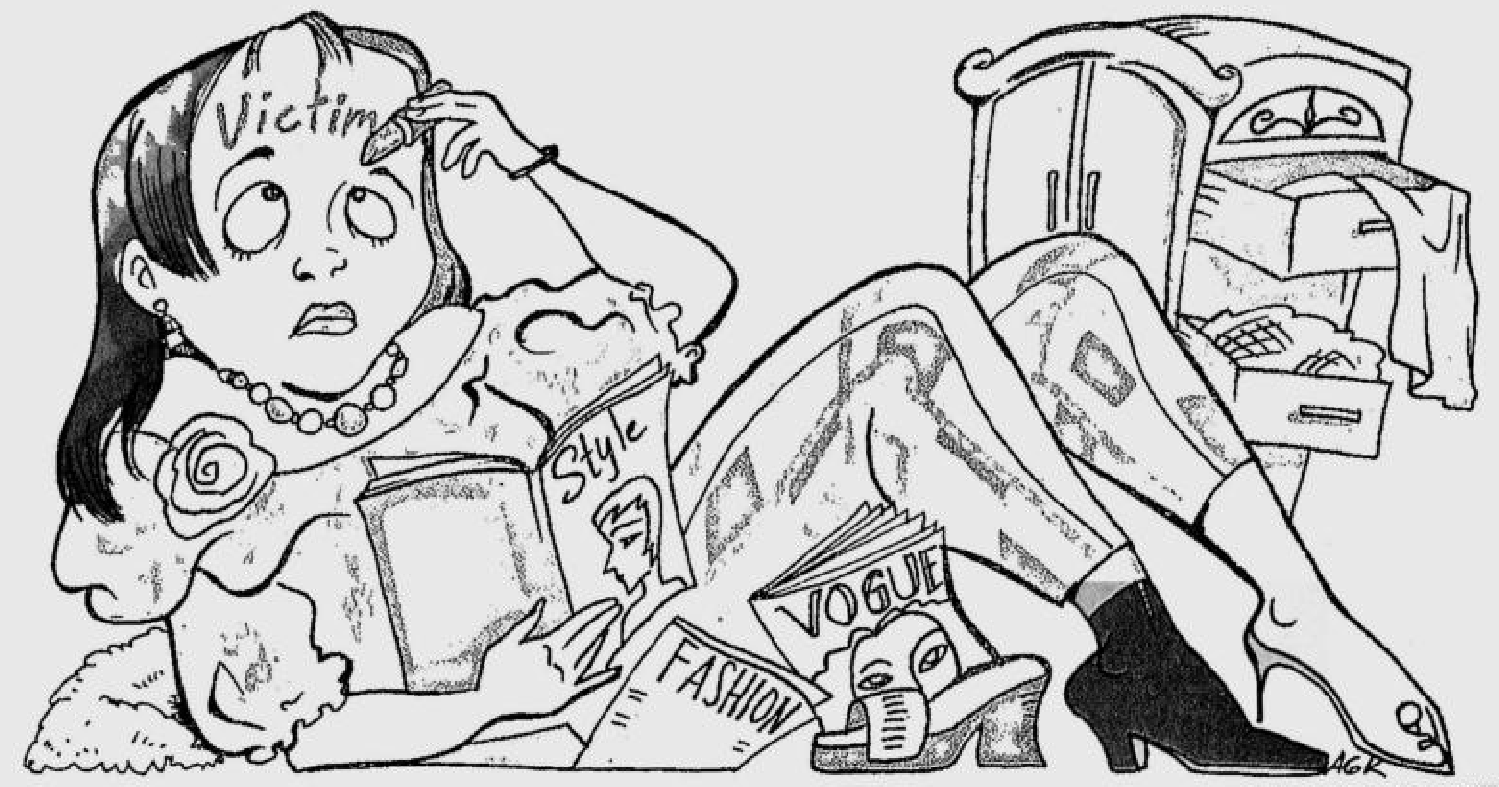

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

FASHION ADVICE

Of fashion victims, formal affairs and sensitive skin

By Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

What we do in fashion is show an extreme. In real life, women need to find a balance.—Francois Nars .

I LOVE fashion! I buy all the latest magazines—Vogue, Bazaar, In Style, Preview, Mega and Metro—and have a tendency to follow all kinds of trends and fads. I feel like a fashion victim of sorts. How can I avoid looking like one?

Do you wear trendy clothes and accessories that don't suit your personality, style, body type and age? Do you spend inordinate amounts of time and money putting together your outfits? Do you wear clothes that scream "LV," "Gucci," "Prada," "Chanel" and other such brands, from head to toe? Do you copy the outfits that supermodel Giselle wears in the pages of Vogue or Bazaar? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you are probably the true-blue fashion victim that you think you are.

Don't get me wrong. There's absolutely nothing sinful about loving fashion. I know a whole lot of women (including me!) with an intense passion for it. The problem lies in not knowing what's right for you and just blindly following the dictates of fashion designers, fashion houses and fashionistas the world over.

The best way to avoid being a victim is by letting your personal style shine through. Wear things because you like them and are comfortable in them, not because they happen to be the "in" things that season. If you feel good, then you'll definitely look good as well.

Next, choose items that hide your flaws and highlight your best features. For example, don't attempt to wear chunky necklaces if your neck is not long enough to carry the look. Avoid wearing obis if you have large breasts and are short-waisted.

Consider your age. If you are on the mature side, maybe you should avoid wearing extra-frilly, juvenile-looking peasant blouses. If you are in your early 20s, take advantage of the fact and enjoy the quirkier side of fashion.

Simply put, don't follow trends if they do not suit you. And remember that what you want to achieve is effortless style. Anything too contrived will defeat this purpose.

It is most important to be yourself and to have fun in the process. Don't be a clone. Learn to express yourself through fashion and you'll surely make your own style statements.

I'm invited to a wedding next week that is "strictly formal." I never really thought about what to wear because of all the activities during these holidays. Now, I am in quite a dilemma.

What is considered "formal" nowadays? I'm 22 years old and a bit chubby, so I was thinking of wearing an all-black suit that's similar to the one Jennifer Aniston wore in one of the awards shows. Unfortunately, I left my blazer-top in the US, together with some of my formal dresses. I don't want to buy a new dress or top because it would be such a waste. I do have a classic wrap-around gray chiffon blouse that doesn't cling to my body. Do you think that would be considered formal enough for this event?

A "strictly formal" dress code means that you have to don a long gown, very formal dress or a tuxedo suit. Generally speaking, the fabric of your clothing determines its formality. So when attending formal affairs, you have to choose items made of fabrics like chiffon, satin, silk, organza, brocade, taffeta, lace or pieces that are sequined, beaded and the like.

I would normally stress the importance of following dress codes but never to the point of breaking the bank and spending uselessly. There are more practical ways of dressing formally, looking elegant and feeling exquisite sans the long gown and extravagant cocktail dress.

The secret is in enhancing your outfit with the perfect accessories. Your black suit would have been ideal for this situation since it is easy to dress up and can slim down your appearance considerably. But go ahead and wear your gray chiffon blouse with your black trousers. Just make sure that your pants are made of a dressy fabric so they are formal enough for the affair.

> Avoid being a fashion victim. Let your personal style shine through

To add panache, choose one-of-a-kind accouterments like a unique beaded or vintage purse and a pair of sexy satin stilettos in black or silver.

Your choice of jewelry will also spell the difference between ho-hum and exceptional style. You can go Victorian by wearing a cameo brooch or pendant and strands upon strands of lustrous pearls. Or go chic, sleek and ultra-glam by donning diamond studs and a choker. Since you are quite young, a choker of colored stones will also look good on you. As I always say, it really all depends on your personal style and preference.

You're probably thinking that this means added expenditure on your part but not necessarily so. You can always raid your mom's or favorite aunt's jewelry box or buy faux jewelry that look classy enough.

Wearing the right kind of makeup and styling your hair into a formal 'do will also help you achieve a more dressy appearance. You can wear silvery eye shadow, creamy light pink cheeks and pale, shimmery lipstick. Or go dramatic with kohl-lined eyes and light lips or ruby red lips with light eye makeup. You can style your hair into a loose chignon or you can leave it down.

Whatever you decide, remember that the most important ingredients in creating your formal evening look are your confidence and style.

I read your advice to a lady from Germany about moisturizing her skin consistently to prevent dry skin. I also have dry skin, but each time I use store-bought moisturizers, my skin gets irritated. It seems I have extra-sensitive skin and have to be extra careful about what products I use. How do I solve my dry/sensitive skin problem?

The best advice I can give you regarding this matter is to consult with a qualified dermatologist, who can check out your skin problem and recommend the best products. But just in case you don't have the time or the resources, I have contacted Dr. Gio Dimayuga, a diplomate of the Philippine Dermatological Society and a consultant at the Makati Medical Center and Asian Hospital, to give his recommendations.

He says, "First, it is important to determine whether we are dealing with just dry sensitive skin or if there is in fact a chronic dermatological condition that needs the attention of a qualified dermatologist. Assuming the former, you may try washing your face gently with a mild soap, without scrubbing. You may try your old trusty white Dove soap unscented bar, Oilatum bar, Sebamed gentle soap, Cetaphil lotion, Neutrogena extra gentle cleanser or Physiogel."

Next, he suggests that you use moisturizers such as Oilatum cream moisturizer, Cetaphil moisturizing cream, Aveeno colloidal oatmeal emollient, or Nutraderm lotion. Massage the lotion/cream gently and in a circular motion all over the face, extending to the neck area until all traces of the product disappear.

"You must apply the above-mentioned moisturizers while your skin is still damp. Then you can apply makeup or a sunblock suitable for the face. This procedure can be repeated two to three times a day," he adds.

If this doesn't work, Dr. Dimayuga says you can go to any of the bigger drugstores and order for a compounding of equal parts of water and Aquaphor ointment. This can be used as a moisturizer, although it's a bit heavier and tends to be slightly greasy (this is excellent for the body).

Finally, Dr. Dimayuga says, "If dryness, irritation or rashes persist, a trip to the dermatologist's office is warranted. You could be suffering from other conditions like seborrheic dermatitis. Your doctor will help you determine what is causing all your skin problems. He may prescribe a mild steroidal preparation to be used sparingly and for a limited period of time."

E-mail the author at apsadvice@hotmail.com.

Problems of a cook

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Tita Dulce

DEAR Tita Dulce,

I have just been hired by a newly married couple. After breakfast, they leave for office and I just tidy up the house. My problem starts when the wife arrives home while I am frying fish for supper. She complains about the smell and starts throwing things in anger. You see, she is now two months pregnant and is very sensitive to odors in the house. I have to cook fish because that is the order of the husband. I had tried cooking early in the afternoon, but the husband complained that it was cold.

I am a high school graduate, and my parents cannot afford to send me to college. What should I do—look for another job?

SHEILA

Nowadays, looking for another job may be a problem. Your only complaint is her temper because she is pregnant, so you must bear in mind that two months from now, she will be cool-headed again.

In the meantime, here are some suggestions on cooking fish. Lifestyles today dictate that we store fish in the freezer to save on time going to the market. Thaw frozen fish in milk (a mixture of half evaporated milk and half water). The result: your fish will have a fresh-caught flavor.

To avoid fishy smell, you can soak frozen fish in vinegar and water before cooking it for a sweet tender taste.

If you intend to fry salted fish (*daing*) for dinner, soak it first in vinegar for at least an hour to take away the smell.

Here is another tip: When cooking vegetables with onions and garlic, or anything that gives off unpleasant odors, place on the burner beside it a small pan of vinegar. Turn on a slow flame to simmer.

Here is yet another tip: place a few teaspoons of sugar, sprinkle with cinnamon, in an empty pie tin. Slowly burn over the stove. When she comes home, she will think you have been baking cinnamon rolls or cookies that afternoon.

I hope the above can help you. To the readers, when you have cooking problems, please write to the Food page of the Lifestyle section.

E-mail titadulce@netscape.net or send letters to P.O. Box 2353, Makati CPO 1263 Makati City, or PDI, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City

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LIFESTYLE

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Quotes to mark the mood by

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

ONE idle morning last week found me torn between staying glued to "Sleepless in Seattle" on HBO (What girl hasn't seen it again and again? Like getting your regular fix) and rushing to the tennis court where my butt just might get kicked in a most precise way.

I still crack up when the guy in Meg Ryan's office says, "Statistics say it's easier to get killed by a terrorist than for a woman over 40 to get married these days." One more quote to mark the '90s by. (Of course, the terrorist-woman-over-40-marriage ratio hasn't changed in the new millennium, even worsened perhaps. This time it's easier to be kidnapped by a terrorist than for a woman just over 30 to get hitched.)

That gave me the idea to try and remember a few interesting quotes from friends that paint the lifestyle mood and mind of the times—from '02 to yesterday:

A few interesting quotes from friends paint the lifestyle mood and mind of the times

"Our politics sucks big-time. That's why our country is so f--ked up."—A friend who just read the day's headline on charter change after GMA announced she was dropping out of the presidential race.

"We are a breast-obsessed country."—Dr. **Vicky Belo,** explaining why breast augmentation surgery is becoming popular here, even among young women.

"After straight-perm, things will never be the same for you."—**Ricky Reyes,** after he sold the idea to me and to countless other women.

"I'm a control freak that's why I'll never have botox again. I can't stand it that I can't control my forehead."—A girl friend who didn't want another round of this wrinkle-zapping treatment that immobilized muscles of the face prone to wrinkles.

"Yoga, yoga and more yoga."—A friend who discovered a better alternative to having a man.

"I'll be in a fetal position."—A friend when asked how he was spending a love-less Valentine's Day.

"They're playing the old Jedi mind tricks."—Men friends who are getting more and more wary of the women they date.

"Must be the Wonderbra."—A bachelor trying to explain today's pretty-young-thing population boom.

"We feel like pedophiles."—Late-30something men describing a night of girl-watching in a resto strip and the so apparent population explosion of pretty young women.

"The selection has never been wider and better."—A connoisseur of women and formerly one of Manila's most elusive bachelors, describing today's generation of sexy and pretty Filipinas as compared to the previous generation.

QUOTES/ D2

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Ecolmare boats resurface for Pasig drive

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

FOR YEARS now, a question regarding the whereabouts of the two Ecolmare boats acquired in 1998 to help dredge the Pasig River, has been nagging a lot of people. They wanted to know: what had become of them?

The boats had been purchased from Italy by the Clean and Green Foundation Inc. (CGFI) for P11 million, but since the Pasig River Rehabilitation Program (PRRP) of the Ramos Administration was converted into the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) during the Estrada regime, nothing had been heard of them.

Now at last, that question has been answered. All this time, we are told, the boats were docked at the Coast Guard station near Malacañang, where, for some reason, they were left unused. But now, they have been reactivated for solid waste collection and have become a familiar sight as they ply the Pasig. They are especially effective, say CGFI officials, in clearing the waters of water lilies. The boats (full name Ecol-mare Grancevola) are also known to be effective in scooping out garbage directly from the water without human exertion and contact with the waste.

The ceremonies, held at Malacañang Park (beside the Pasig) last December, included the formal turnover of the boats to the PRRC represented by Budget Secretary Emilia T. Boncodin, who is also its cochair, by the CGFI represented by its president, Ricardo S. Pascua.

This turnover was, in effect, the second one. The first took place when the boats were placed under the care of the PRRC in 1998. This time around, however, it was done in a formal ceremony with a deed of donation signed by the two representatives and MMDA chair and concurrent PRRC chair Bayani Fernando.

We also learn that the funds to purchase the boats were initially donated by Unilever and Herma Shipping Co., with some support from the CGFI's fund-raising arm, Piso Para Sa Pasig. The PPP initiated a system of setting bottles and cans in strategic places around Metro Manila (banks, schools, department stores, etc.) into which people could drop their hard-earned pesos for a cause.

The second part of the ceremony was the launching of the Pasig River Heritage Collection, composed of a Pasig River Heritage Map, probably the first of its kind, and a CD, called "Muling Aawit Ang Pasig," containing songs and poems composed and rendered by Filipino artists inspired by the environment and specifically, the Pasig.

The map unfolds to show the districts and streets that lie along the route of the Pasig , and in some ways influenced by it. Adding to the map's visual impact are the photos and pictures of past and present structures—churches, schools, bridges and other historical landmarks—provided with help of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, the Department of Tourism and Heritage Conservation Society.

The route of the annual 42-km-Pasig River Heritage Marathon is also featured. Said to be the counterpart of such well-known runs as those of the New York, Boston, London and Berlin Marathons, the Metro Manila version veers from traditional practices in that instead of going off on a straight path from one point to another, it follows a winding route designed to follow the flow of the river, its historic and environmental aspects, from "old Intramuros to the futuristic Global City of Fort Bonifacio."

On both the map and the CD, one finds introductory messages from CGFI chair and former First Lady Amelita M. Ramos, who, with the help of her energetic staff, has kept the cause of Pasig River rehabilitation going through the different administrations. The Heritage Collection is available at the CGFI office on the 2/F Benlife Building, BPI Compound, Muralla St., Intramuros, Manila, tel. 528-0504/0976 (CGFI), or at the Orchidarium, 527-6376/6378.

Flushing our garbage

When MMDA chair Bayani Fernando suggested that Manilans throw their garbage literally down their toilets, he took a lot of people by surprise. All this time, we've been following the careful practice of never clogging our drains, especially our toilets, by using too much toilet paper or throwing extraneous material into them. And now, here is the good Chairman telling us to do the opposite. I wish he has a good explanation for his pronouncement. Maybe he has found a new formula for waste disposal that he has not bothered to explain fully. I truly wish we could just throw out garbage into our toilet bowls and flush them out of our lives. But realists that we are, we know our drainage systems are several hundred years behind those hi-tech countries whose waste disposal systems include throwing kitchen waste straight down from the kitchen sink.

Calling our environmental engineers and technologists! Maybe you can shed light on this.

E-mail the author at dorisnuyda@yahoo.com

Quotes to mark the mood by

From page D1

"Get rid of psychic dirt."—**Gina Lopez** advising on how to clear up your clutter.

"Each morning when I look at the mirror and see the wrinkles, I remember each man who put them there."—**Joey Panlilio** quoting Jean Moreau on why she never bothered to have a face-lift.

"A hospice is not a place to die but a way to die."—A friend espousing hospice care in the country.

"Talk is overrated."—A friend after he talked his heart out.

"Evil has descended on our world."—A La Sallian, after Ateneo's UAAP victory. (It was just the passion of the moment, I think.)

"For the separated woman, love and sex are a buffet. Avoid the à la carte mentality."—A male friend's advice to today's lonely women. We presumed he was on the menu.

"The Carpenters. That's an era not even today's retro can bring back."—**Auggie Cordero**, during his stay-in-his-room birthday "celebration" as we watched a video of Karen and Richard Carpenter from the '70s.

"How do you want it played out? Do we do baseline or do we rush to the net and volley?"—A friend resorting to tennis-talk to describe today's relationship. (How about just hitting with a trainer?)

From **Louie Cruz**, the social arbiter of the '80s-'90s and organizer of the city's most memorable and wildest parties but who now leads a (relatively) laid-back life in Boracay, many Zen quotes he'd text me now and then, as some sort of motherly advice:

"You'll be surprised what your mature heart can take."

"The quieter you become the more you are able to hear."

"Reality is only an agreement."

"When the pools of perception are cleansed, everything appears as it is."

"All the harms, fears and sufferings in the world arise from self-grasping. Loosen the grip. Let go."

"The exemplary men are gay, and not one of them runs the country."—I said that.

Look, no conditioner

Readers can't seem to get enough of hair news. That's the feeling I get from my e-mail. At this time last year, I had my hair straight-permed and told women about it. This time, I took it a step further—I gave in to Ricky's (Reyes) nagging that I have my hair "reborn." Again, I must admit, he was right—it was another lifestyle-altering move.

It takes just an hour—amino acid "little pearls" are pressed on your hair, which is then "ironed out" and shampooed. Nothing scary (no harmful chemicals) or drastic, but the result is dramatic. For the first time, your hair has no tangles even after shampoo. After you towel-dry it, you can choose not to use a brush, and only use your fingers to "comb" it. It feels so supple and silky.

I've had the procedure done a week ago, and I still haven't used conditioner. Some mornings, in fact, I try not using a brush. Just my fingers.

"Reborn" complements the straight-perm, I find out now, because it prevents your newly permed hair from feeling dry, rougher and harder to disentangle (mine didn't). With reborn after straight-perm, your hair feels a lot softer.

This relatively new process makes hot oil obsolete (which I didn't believe in anyway), and the use of conditioner optional. More important, my hair feels healthier.

Maribel's oils

Among the "personal" gifts (as opposed to recycled and corporate-must) I got this Christmas was a jar of body salt scrub with vanilla which my friend, **Maribel Espino**, herself whipped up. I use it now in lieu of shower gel and it feels like bathing in moisturizer, so that sometimes I don't have to use moisturizing lotion anymore.

Maribel's concoction feels fresh, soothing and softening. She doesn't sell it but she lets her relative, Dr. Belo, use it in her spa.

Maribel has been doing aromatherapy for 15 years now, most of the time not commercially. (It was only last month that she launched her aromatherapy line—called Fleur Essence—at Rustan's Essences.) She sources pure essential oils (as opposed to the heavily diluted ones sold on retail), mixes them and uses them for various purposes.

Maribel's tips:

- To make her husband Ricky sleep more soundly, she uses essential oils of lavender, orange, neroli and chamomile. She applies them directly to the pillow or puts two to three drops on a cotton ball, which is then put inside the pillow;
- For reading or studying, rosemary essential oil (inhaled) for alertness and good memory;
- To drive away ants, put several drops of peppermint essential oil on cotton balls or tissue and leave them in the trouble spots.
- To create your own scent: Mix these essential oils—10 drops bergamot, 10 drops tangerine, 6 drops vanilla, 3 drops frankincense. Blend the synergy you have created with 1 oz ethyl alcohol or vodka. Shake well and let age for two to three weeks before using.

This year, I think I myself will try using and mixing essential oils for scents, health and home chores. There's nothing like a good scent to unclog the mind. Mixing oils should be more therapeutic than mixing with—or getting mixed up—with people.

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@skyinet.net

Workshop on Ikenobo styles

PROF. Nobu Kurashige

A SEMINAR-WORKSHOP on Ikenobo styles will be conducted by Prof. Nobu Kurashige, a visiting professor from Japan, on Jan. 16-18, at the Holy Trinity Cathedral, McKinley Road, Makati City.

John Go Hoc, president of the Ikenobo Ikebana Society of Manila, announced that the three-day hands-on workshop will cover Shoka and Rikka styles both classical and modern.

An instructor of Ikebana at Yamaguchi Prefectural University, Iwakuni, Junior College and at the Japan Broadcasting System Cultural Center in both Hiroshima and Iwakuni Cities, Kurashige also appears weekly on a program produced by Yamaguchi KRY Broadcasting System.

Call John Go Hoc at 527-4149/527-4151 or Joyce Kato at 807-2814.

Exhibit on experimental and futuristic gardening

THE PHILIPPINE Horticultural Society will hold Horticulture 2003 on Jan. 25 to Feb. 3 at the Manila Seedling Bank Compound (Greenhouses 1 & 2), Quezon Avenue corner Edsa, QC. The theme of this event is "Experimental and Futuristic Landscapes and Gardens for the 21st Century."

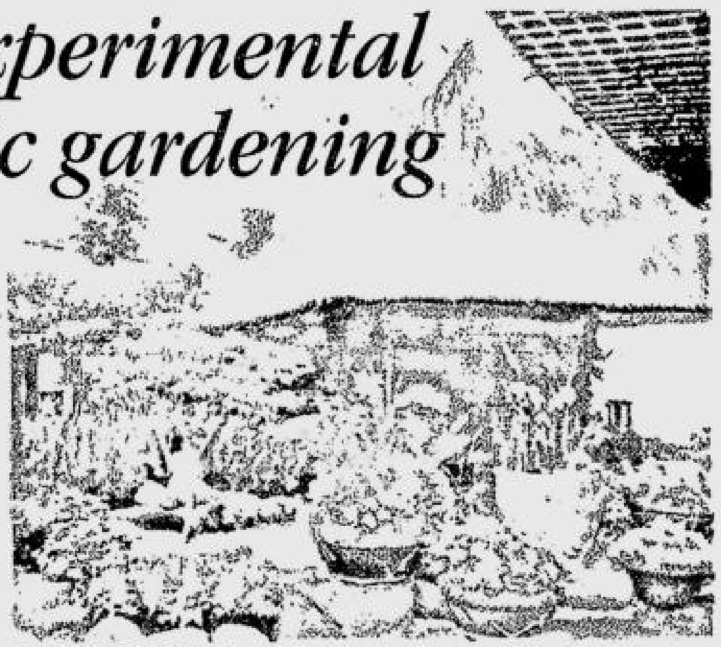
Joining this year's exhibit are King Louie's Flowers and Plants Inc., Purificacion Orchids and Ornamentals, Philippine Bonsai Society, Natural Stone Society of the Philippines, Cacti and Succulent Society of the Philippines, Puentespina Orchids of Davao and Mett's Plant Arts.

The show will be formally opened by Bonsai and Suiseki experts Willi Hahn, Fely Gupit and David Du.

Serapion Metilla will come up with a one-man plant art exhibit. Rex Puentespina will show his collection of birds and new plant product lines such as carnivorous plants and European ferns. Fr. Art Borja, a guest exhibitor, will bring out his own new hybrid crypthantus. Cora Purificacion will exhibit award-winning plants bred or collected by her late son, Eric.

More than 70 commercial plant growers, nurseries, fertilizer companies, garden accessories suppliers will display and sell their products at the commercial section of the show. Lectures on horticulture and raffles will also be held.

Call Peejay Nepomuceno at (0917) 410-3718 or Thelma Miguel at (0917) 676-3646.



A LANDSCAPE design by King Louie Flowers & Plants

FRED Salud's euphorbia

BROMELIADS of Rene Dofitas

BROMELIADS of Negros Orchid Society

Seminar on enhancing one's creativity

GOINGS ON

"TAPPING the Creative Universe" workshop will be held on Jan. 13-17 and 20, 7-9 p.m., at Tao Center, 1499 Carissa St., Dasmarinas Village, Makati. It will partly employ the techniques found in "The Artist's Way" (by Julia Cameron and Mark Bryan) plus Jim Paredes' practices as a multifaceted artist. These have proven to be effective in dealing with blocked individuals, most especially those who find themselves in a creative rut. Call Josie at 845-3961/3971 or Ollie at 426-3208.

SEMINAR. Dero Pedero's life-enhancing seminars "Make Your Impossible Dreams Come True!" and "Money, Money! Secret Principles of Money & Prosperity" on Jan. 18 and 25, respectively, at Buendia Tower, 501 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., between Taft and Bautista Streets. Pedero will reveal the universal principles, secrets, techniques and strategies for attaining personal success, prosperity and fulfillment. E-mail DeroSeminar@yahoo.com or call (0920) 405-3233.

CONCERT. The University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music, with the Cultural Center of the Philippines, will present the annual "Tribute to the Thomasian" concert on Jan. 11, 8 p.m., at the CCP Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo. The concert will feature the UST Symphony Orchestra with Prof. Renato Lucas, conductor, with the special participation of the orchestra alumni and will highlight the Conservatory's winners of the 2002 National Competition for Young Artists. Call 731-3101 local 8246 or 731-4022.

REUNION. The high school class of 1983 of St. Scholastica's College-Manila will hold its 20th reunion on Jan. 11 at the Parish Social Hall of Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City. A thanksgiving Mass at 4:30 p.m. will precede the event. Call 631-9219 or 536-8189.

RECITAL. Hiyas Alejo Hila will give a solo piano recital on Jan. 17 at the Francisco Santiago Hall, Equitable PCI Bank Tower 1, 7:30 p.m. The program will include Beethoven's Sonata in El-Flat Major, Op. 81a ("Les Adieux"), selections from Lizst's Annees de Pelerinage, Book I (Suisse); "Au lac de Wallenstadt" and Au bord d'une source," Chopin's Barcarolle, Op. 60; and Prokofiev's Sonata No. 6, Op. 82 in A Major. Call 818-1403, 840-7000 local 2258 and 2630.

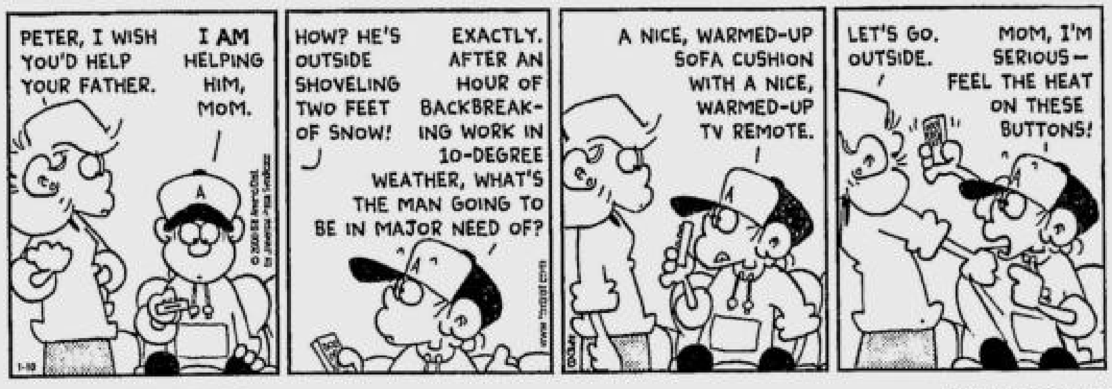
PROMO. At Robinsons Supermarket, "The Great Family Shopping Raid" promo is ongoing until Jan. 15. Be one of the 50 lucky families to win a shopping raid worth up to P20,000. Every single receipt purchase of any grocery item worth at least P300 at any Robinsons Supermarket or Robinsons Choice entitles the shopper to one raffle coupon. The "raiders" will be known during the grand draw on Jan. 23. Robinsons Supermarket will soon open at the Nepo Mall in Angeles City, Pampanga.

FIESTA SALE. The fiesta spirit goes from small town to mall town this month via the "Grand Fiesta Sale" at the Ayala Center Makati on Jan. 12-31. In cooperation with the Department of Tourism, the PCVC and the Philippine Retailers Association, the event starts the year-long fiesta tradition in the country. At Ayala Center, items will be marked down with big discounts. Shoppers will also be given a special treat. For a minimum purchase of P500, shoppers are entitled to an instant prize and raffle entry where one can win exciting gift packs from Island Souvenir and raffle prizes such as trips to Corregidor and other Philippine islands.

PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP. Noted Canadian photographer Don MacGregor will hold a hands-on workshop on Jan. 16 in Corregidor. He will tackle environmental portraiture. The workshop serves as the opening salvo of Photoworld Manila 2003 on Jan. 17-22 at the Glorietta, Ayala Center, Makati City.

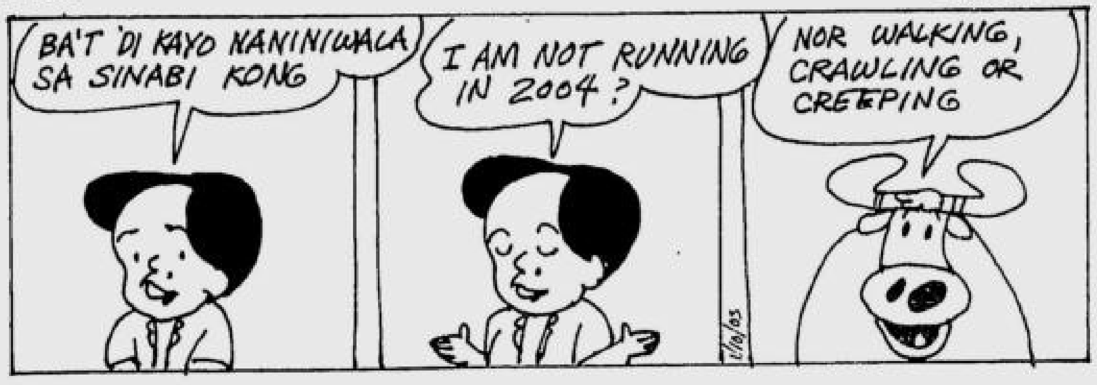
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


PETER, I WISH YOU'D HELP YOUR FATHER.
I AM HELPING HIM, MOM.
HOW? HE'S OUTSIDE SHOVELING TWO FEET OF SNOW!
EXACTLY. AFTER AN HOUR OF BACKBREAKING WORK IN 10-DEGREE WEATHER, WHAT'S THE MAN GOING TO BE IN MAJOR NEED OF?
A NICE, WARMED-UP SOFA CUSHION WITH A NICE, WARMED-UP TV REMOTE.
LET'S GO. OUTSIDE.
MOM, I'M SERIOUS — FEEL THE HEAT ON THESE BUTTONS!

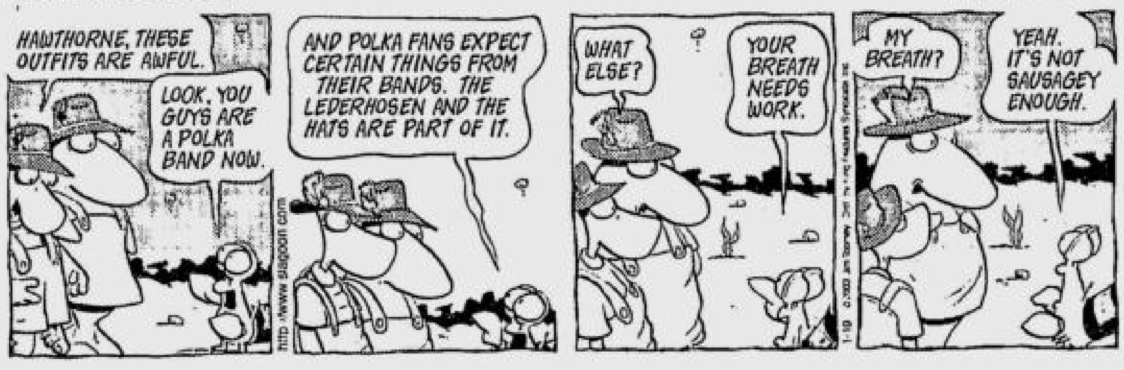
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


BA'T 'DI KAYO NANINIWALA SA SINABI KONG
I AM NOT RUNNING IN 2004?
NOR WALKING, CRAWLING OR CREEPING
1/10/03

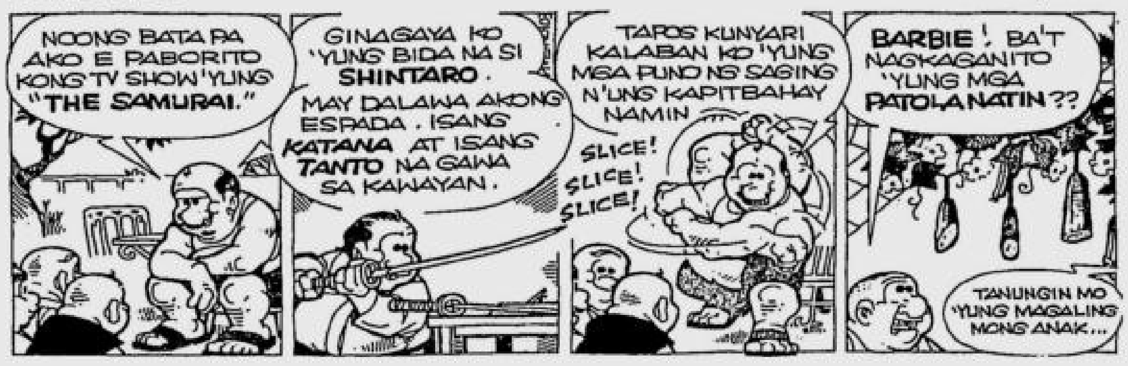
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


HAWTHORNE, THESE OUTFITS ARE AWFUL.
LOOK, YOU GUYS ARE A POLKA BAND NOW.
AND POLKA FANS EXPECT CERTAIN THINGS FROM THEIR BANDS. THE LEDERHOSEN AND THE HATS ARE PART OF IT.
WHAT ELSE?
YOUR BREATH NEEDS WORK.
MY BREATH?
YEAH. IT'S NOT SAUSAGEY ENOUGH.
http://www.slagoon.com

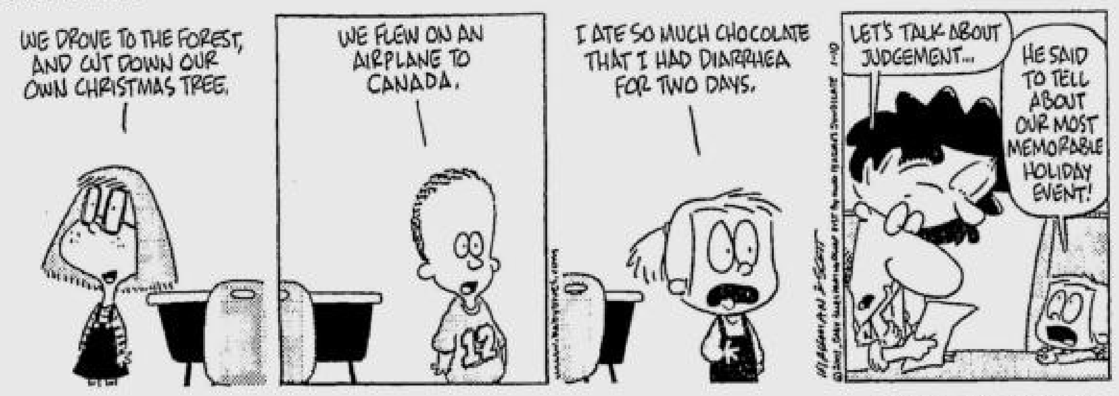
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NOONG BATA PA AKO E PABORITO KONG TV SHOW 'YUNG "THE SAMURAI."
GINAGAYA KO 'YUNG BIDA NA SI SHINTARO. MAY DALAWA AKONG ESPADA. ISANG KATANA AT ISANG TANTO NA GAWA SA KAWAYAN.
TAPOS KUNYARI KALABAN KO 'YUNG MGA PUNO NG SAGING N'UNG KAPITBAHAY NAMIN
SLICE! SLICE! SLICE!
BARBIE! BA'T NAGKAGANITO 'YUNG MGA PATOLA NATIN??
TANUNGIN MO 'YUNG MAGALING MONG ANAK...

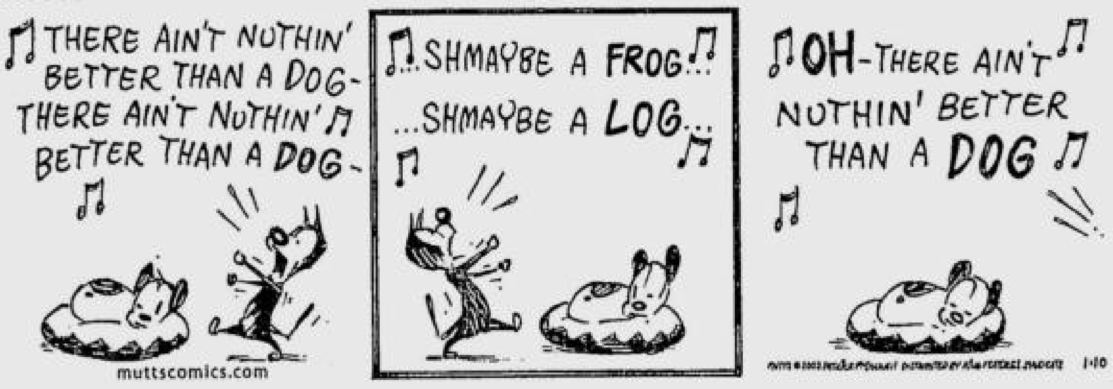
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WE DROVE TO THE FOREST, AND CUT DOWN OUR OWN CHRISTMAS TREE.
WE FLEW ON AN AIRPLANE TO CANADA.
I ATE SO MUCH CHOCOLATE THAT I HAD DIARRHEA FOR TWO DAYS.
LET'S TALK ABOUT JUDGEMENT...
HE SAID TO TELL ABOUT OUR MOST MEMORABLE HOLIDAY EVENT!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

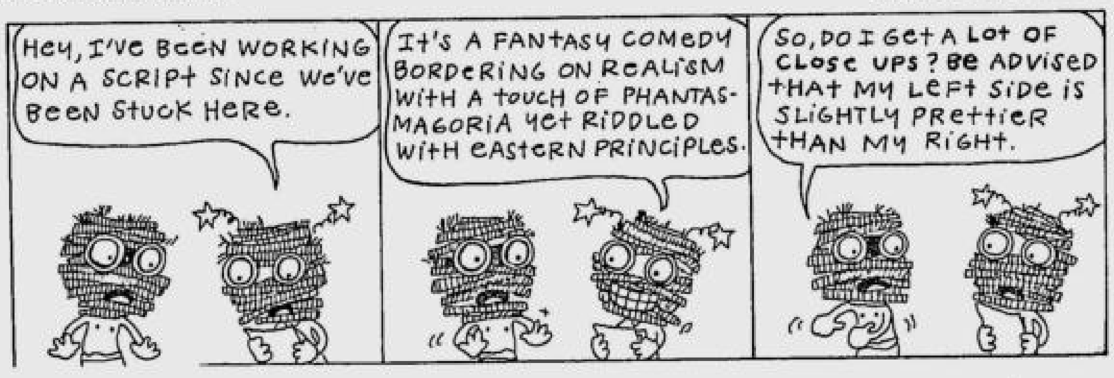
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


♫ THERE AIN'T NUTHIN' BETTER THAN A DOG- THERE AIN'T NUTHIN' ♫ BETTER THAN A DOG- ♫
♫ SHMAYBE A FROG ♫ ...SHMAYBE A LOG... ♫ ♫
♫ OH-THERE AIN'T ♫ NUTHIN' BETTER THAN A DOG ♫ ♫
muttscomics.com
1-10

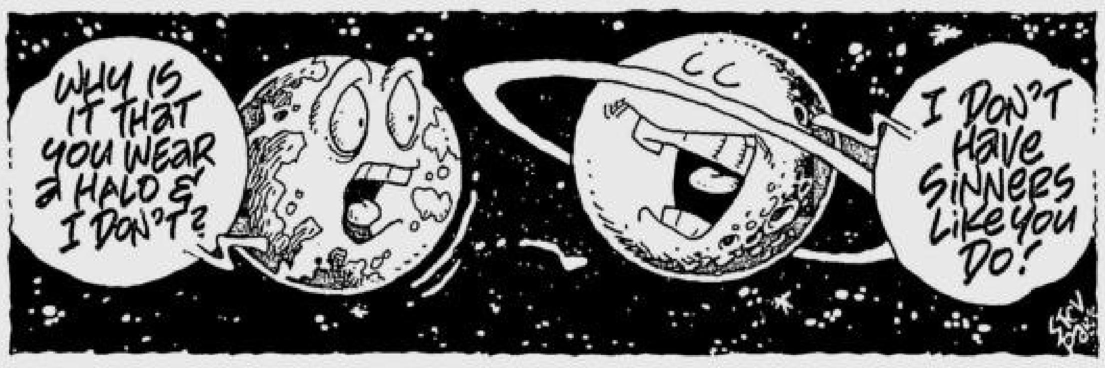
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, I've been working on a script since we've been stuck here.
It's a fantasy comedy bordering on realism with a touch of phantasmagoria yet riddled with eastern principles.
So, do I get a lot of close ups? Be advised that my left side is slightly prettier than my right.

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


Why is it that you wear a halo & I don't?
I don't have sinners like you do!

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Pat Benatar, Rod Stewart, George Foreman, Frank Sinatra Jr.

Happy Birthday: You'll be tough, intense and ready to face the world this year. Yours will be a powerful presence and your drive and determination will make you a difficult competitor to beat. Don't lose sight of those who depend on you. Your numbers are 8, 20, 23, 27, 32, 38

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You will surprise even yourself with the things you say and do. Avoid taking a risk that might lead to losses.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You will have to mind what you say to others today. Deception is likely if you talk to someone who doesn't have your best interests at heart. Stay calm and don't repeat what you hear.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Proceed with caution if you are taking care of someone else's affairs. Do some more research before making a decision that will affect others.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Plan your day to suit yourself. You may be taken for granted if you are too willing to give your time to others. Refuse to take on unnecessary work for the sake of someone else.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): A pleasure trip will turn out to be better than expected. You are likely to meet someone who will become very fascinated in you. An interesting turn of events is evident.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You will have to be careful what you say to whom. Someone around you is probably not all that trustworthy. Do not even consider a joint financial venture.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Romantic opportunities will develop if you attend a social function today. Your intuitive intelligence will attract people who are interesting and have something to offer you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Deal with personal issues quickly and don't let anything escalate into something you can't control. Put your efforts into bettering your family situation and surroundings.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Property investments will be lucrative today. You will be highly entertaining and will excel if you are fully aware of all your options.

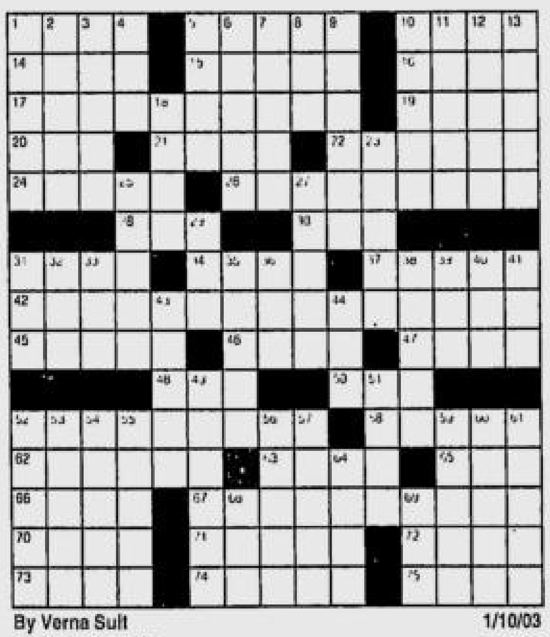
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Take responsibility for your life and what you should be doing to help your family. If you are thinking about going to a social event, expect it to cost more than you anticipate. Do not offer to do something that you probably can't do.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Rely on yourself and you won't be disappointed. You should be careful what you tell to whom. Someone may disclose information about you that is detrimental to your future.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): This can be a great day to put things behind you. The sooner you get those tedious jobs finished, the better you will feel about your future.

Birthday Baby: You will be ready to take advantage of anything that comes your way. You will strive for goodness and a way to get ahead. You will be where the action is, always looking for adventure.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Verna Sult
Silver Spring, MD

1/10/03

ACROSS
1 Swedish pop group
5 Stomachs of ruminants
10 Cyrillic USSR
14 Medical view?
15 Language group of Zulu and Swahili
16 Syngman of Korea
17 Silver rider
19 Ray of "God's Little Acre"
20 Tip
21 Chemical compound
22 Columbus native
24 Babushka
26 Trigger rider
28 Function
30 Dubai et al.
31 Actor Epps
34 Catchall label abbr.
37 Drip-dry fabric
42 Topper rider
45 Marshy depression
46 Seth's pop
47 "Pursuit of the Graf __"
48 Chart
50 Actress Hagen
52 Champion rider
58 Green tea
62 Growing old
63 Honor student's grades?
65 William Tell's canton
66 Skunk LePew
67 Goldie, Mutt, Midnight, etc., rider
70 Actor Morales
71 More authentic
72 Side street
73 Normandy town
74 Spicy dip
75 Spanish some

DOWN
1 Wheel holders
2 Bucking horse
3 Indonesia's __ Islands
4 Naval reply
5 Town on the Firth of Lorn
6 Lord's spread
7 __-Saxon
8 Sault __ Marie
9 Dawn goddess
10 Diet guru Jenny
11 Daphnis' lover
12 Aromatic wood
13 Lowly workers
18 Umps' cohorts
23 Gardeners, at times
25 Rustic
27 New Mexico state flower
29 Comic Phillips
31 Expressions of surprise
32 Hay storage
33 Group of shrinks
35 Not suitable
36 J. Hancocked?
38 Ore analysis
39 Little yelp
40 Lofty poem
41 Comic Louis
43 Geneva's lake
44 __ Darya River
49 Zeroes
51 Spicy cuisine
52 Looks aghast
53 Perspire
54 Highest country
55 MacDonald's refrain
56 Dufy or Walsh
57 Director Peter
59 Actress Lucci
60 Maine campus site
61 Golf course halves
64 Taj Mahal site
68 __ pro nobis
69 Color of the Italian sky

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

S	C	A	R	■	C	A	P	P	■	A	B	B	A	S
L	O	D	E	■	A	S	T	I	■	Q	U	A	S	H
A	M	I	S	E	R	I	S	A	G	U	Y	W	H	O
P	A	T	E	L	L	A	■	G	O	A	■	L	Y	E
■	■	■	R	B	I	■	R	E	T	R	O	■	■	■
■	L	I	V	E	S	W	I	T	H	I	N	H	I	S
S	A	S	E	■	L	A	P	■	■	U	S	A	G	E
E	P	A	■	S	E	N	E	C	A	S	■	I	L	E
M	I	A	M	I	■	■	N	H	S	■	F	R	O	M
I	N	C	O	M	E	H	E	I	S	A	L	S	O	■
■	■	■	P	O	K	E	D	■	U	T	E	■	■	■
A	T	E	■	L	E	M	■	P	A	R	E	N	T	S
C	A	L	L	E	D	A	M	A	G	I	C	I	A	N
R	O	M	E	O	■	N	I	N	E	■	E	L	L	A
E	S	S	E	N	■	S	A	G	S	■	S	E	E	P

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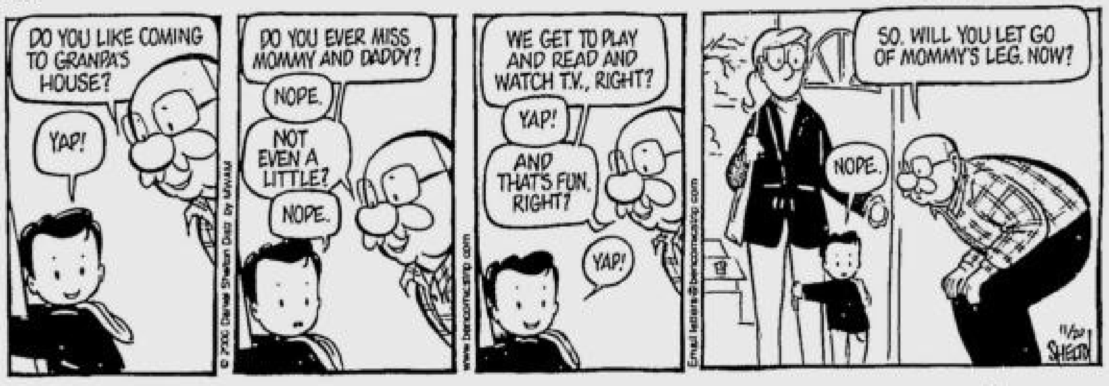
1/10/03

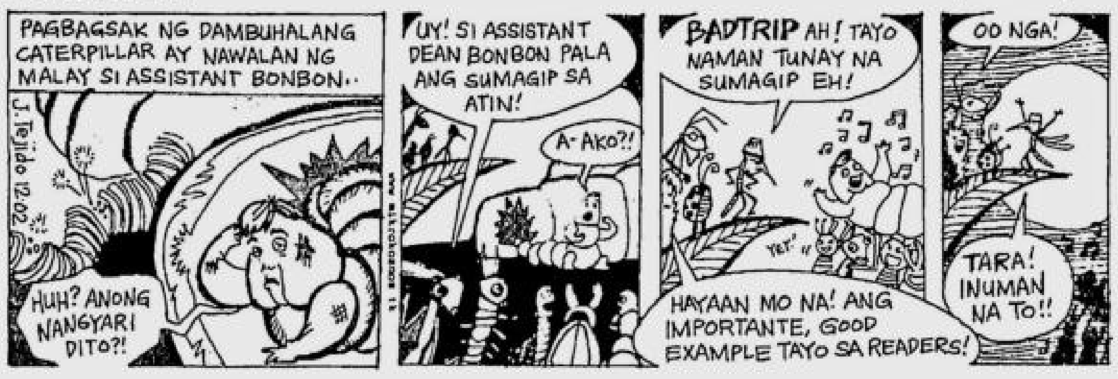
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


DO YOU LIKE COMING TO GRANPA'S HOUSE?
YAP!
DO YOU EVER MISS MOMMY AND DADDY?
NOPE.
NOT EVEN A LITTLE?
NOPE.
WE GET TO PLAY AND READ AND WATCH T.V., RIGHT?
YAP!
AND THAT'S FUN, RIGHT?
YAP!
SO, WILL YOU LET GO OF MOMMY'S LEG, NOW?
NOPE.
SHELTON

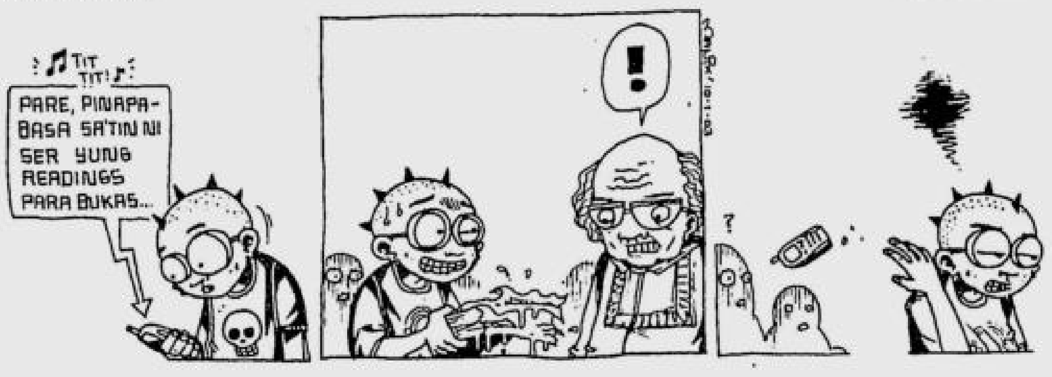
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PAGBAGSAK NG DAMBUHALANG CATERPILLAR AY NAWALAN NG MALAY SI ASSISTANT BONBON..
J. Tejido 12.02
HUH? ANONG NANGYARI DITO?!
UY! SI ASSISTANT DEAN BONBON PALA ANG SUMAGIP SA ATIN!
A-AKO?!
BADTRIP AH! TAYO NAMAN TUNAY NA SUMAGIP EH!
YEY!
HAYAAN MO NA! ANG IMPORTANTE, GOOD EXAMPLE TAYO SA READERS!
OO NGA!
TARA! INUMAN NA TO!!

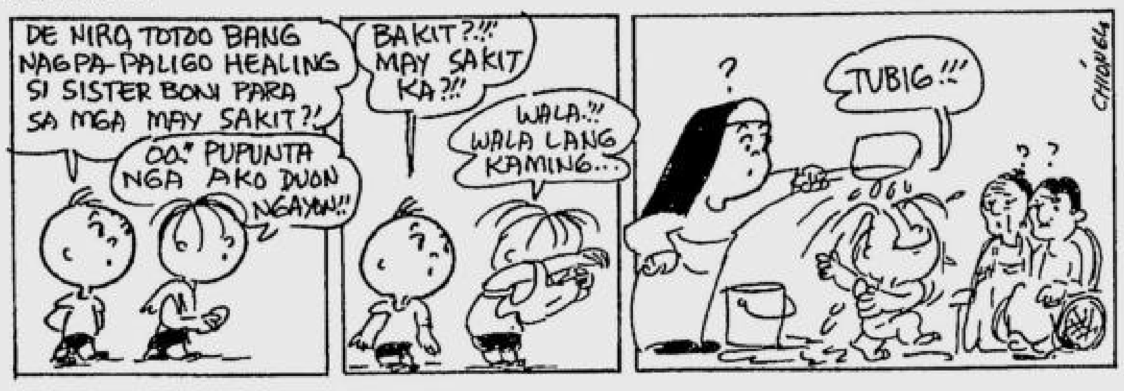
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TIT TIT!
PARE, PINAPA-BASA SA'TIN NI SER YUNG READINGS PARA BUKAS...
!
?

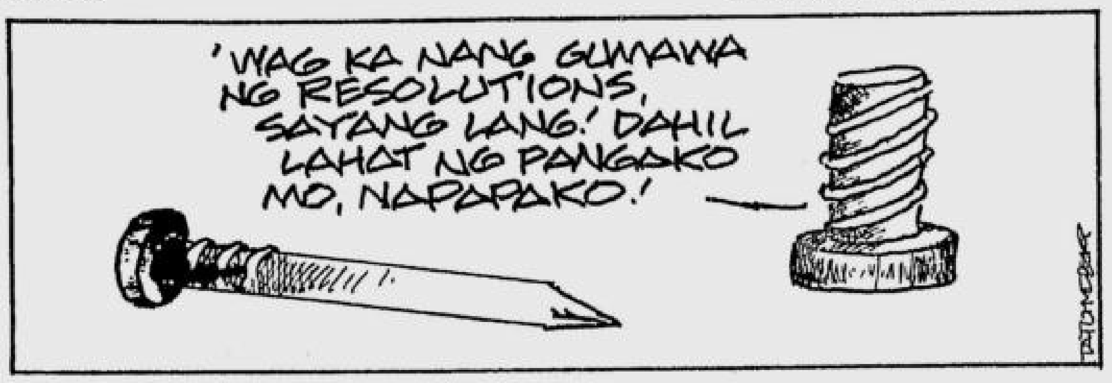
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DE NIRO, TOTOO BANG NAGPA-PALIGO HEALING SI SISTER BONI PARA SA MGA MAY SAKIT?!
OO! PUPUNTA NGA AKO DUON NGAYON!!
BAKIT?!!! MAY SAKIT KA?!!
WALA!!! WALA LANG KAMING...
?
TUBIG!!!
? ?
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


'WAG KA NANG GUMAWA NG RESOLUTIONS, SAYANG LANG! DAHIL LAHAT NG PANGAKO MO, NAPAPAKO!

FIGARO directors and franchisees lend a hand at reviving the *barako* and the local coffee industry.

Plant an heirloom tree

To save the 'barako' from extinction, people are urged to plant the coffee variety in their gardens

By Tita V. Giron

THERE is something very special in the air when you pass the coffee orchards in the Cavite highlands these days. The scent of flowers is everywhere. And, if your eyes are sharp enough, you can see bees and butterflies swarming about the fragrant blooms of coffee trees, which the local folks have propagated for hundreds of years.

Once a year, coffee trees all over the cooler parts of Cavite bloom, usually from December to March when the temperature is low. They're a sight to behold when this happens. The sprawling branches are covered at the tip with white flowers and multicolored berries that mature into the coffee beans we are familiar with. Local coffee growers of old believed that when it rained when the berries were formed, the harvest would be good.

Unfortunately, coffee plantations all over Cavite and other parts of the country are in trouble. Over the years, hundreds of trees have been destroyed to give way to subdivisions, golf courses, and more profitable vegetable gardens that can be harvested year round instead of once-a-year, as in the case of coffee trees. As a result, the coffee tree population has been reduced to a critical level.

More trees are at risk, according to officials of Figaro Coffee Company, which is at the forefront of a campaign to save traditional coffee trees from extinction.

Figaro launched its save-the-*barako* movement three years ago in the coffee-growing areas of Cavite. "Barako" or liberica is the heirloom coffee tree planted by local folks for hundreds of years. The local name comes from a Tagalog word meaning "a male animal that is fierce, macho and strong." Living up to its name, *barako* coffee is strong in flavor and aroma. It is said that houses in the old days were not complete it they did not have coffee trees in the garden.

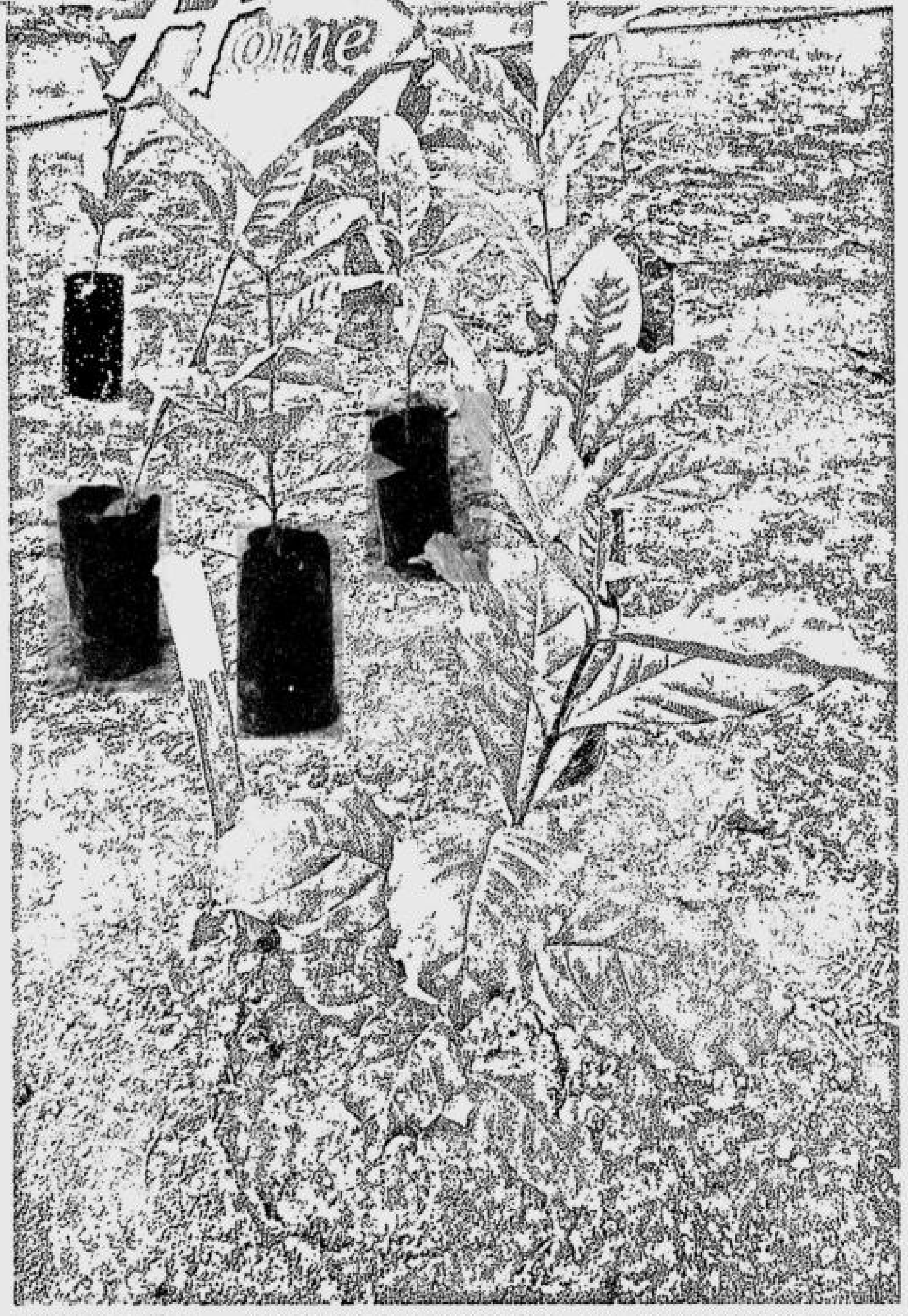
'Barako' planting project

"Unless we can plant 50,000 to 100,000 young *barako* trees in the next five years or-so, the traditional coffee tree will be very rare in the next generation," warned Figaro CEO Chit Juan.

Three years ago, Juan led the launching of the Figaro foundation's tree-planting project to save the *barako* from extinction. Last December, she was among company officials who participated in a coffee tree-planting rite with a new partner, the Landco Pacific property developer, which has turned 116 hectares of prime land in Tagaytay into a hobby farm called Leisure Farms.

At the recent *barako* tree-planting rites that officially launched the partnership, it was announced that Landco and Figaro are setting up a coffee demo area in Leisure Farms. The demo farm will encourage property owners to plant the *barako* in their gardens. "In doing so, they will (be able to do) their share in rejuvenating this coffee variety," Juan said.

At the same time, the two companies encouraged gardens all over the country (where the weather is similar to Tagaytay's) to plant coffee. The trees are hardy. With regular pruning, they can produce beans every year. It goes without saying that the clusters of fragrant white flowers and multicolored berries will brighten up any garden.



BARAKO seedlings ready for planting

ALBY Xerez-Burgos, strategic business unit head of Leisure Farms, and Chit Juan, Figaro CEO, lead volunteers at a "Special Barako Tree Planting Activity"

Veteran garden expert Serapion Metilla also urged garden hobbyists to grow heirloom coffee trees in their yard. His father, the late Andres Metilla, was a coffee farmer in Bansalan, Davao del Sur, back in the days when local folks have not heard of coffee grinders, much less coffee press and percolator.

Metilla recalled that his father grew three varieties of coffee at the foot of Mt. Apo where the temperature was cool and typhoons were rare. These were Barako, Robusta and Arabica.

He reminisced, "Barako was the least favored because it was a big tree with big leaves. Robusta was a small tree but it was quite vigorous and produced a lot of coffee beans that we could easily reach. Arabica was a (more delicate) tree that needed a lot of care because it got sick easily. But it has the best quality beans among the three varieties."

According to Metilla, the berries were picked when they were ripe. "It took about one year for the berries to ripen," he said. "When the berries were harvested, these were sun-dried and later pounded to remove the hull (berry cover) from the beans. We cleaned the beans and stored them in sacks."

Metilla longed for the old days when they boiled fresh coffee in a pot. "We only took out the stored coffee beans prior to cooking. These were roasted then pulverized before boiling." We didn't ask the veteran garden expert what they used for straining the coffee grits.

Tips for growing coffee

Plant the coffee seedlings in a sunny area with good drainage. Feed it with complete fertilizer once a month. The trees will start flowering three to four years or later. Prune every year to produce many branches where flowers and berries will grow.

"Rejuvenation" of old tree is a must, Metilla said. The term, as used by expert coffee growers, describes the technique of cutting old branches to induce the growth of young productive branches. It makes the tree productive for many years.

Prune old trees during the rainy season, Metilla advised. For more information on how to grow coffee, call Metilla at 939-4593. Readers who want to participate in the save-a-*barako* project can call Joel Losande or Jake Santos at 435-0327 or 435-0328.

E-mail the author at mgiron@i-manila.com.ph

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- Mr. Roy Mijares
Apartment Contractor
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- Mr. Henry Young
Pasay City

"Frustrating ang ibang water heaters! One, hindi smooth ang flow ng water, minsan biglang lalamig tapos iinit uli. Two, masakit sa mata ang mga designs at nakalitaw pa ang pipes. Three, 'di ko mapili ang tamang temperature na gusto ko kasi limited lang ako sa high, medium, and low. But with the versatile Champs Water Heaters, I never have to be bothered with these problems kasi meron itong stabiliser valve, stylish design, and unique temperature adjuster."

- Mr. Charles Go
Greenmeadows, Q.C.

"Champs Water Heaters helped us a lot with our operation. It gives us the advantage of convenience and safety. It is also very cost efficient. It made us escape the hassles of the primitive method of having to boil water everytime."

- Ms. Regina Beth Moreno
Touch of Glory Prayer
Antipolo City

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